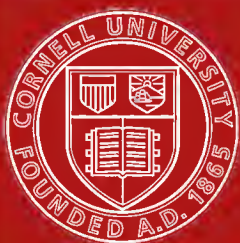


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EDITORIAL NOTE

The publishing of this bulletin marks the beginning of a new policy with regard to Howard College publications. In addition to the regular quarterly bulletins there will be issued from time to time special bulletins containing studies prepared by members of the faculty. In this way it is hoped that the spirit of scholarship and research in the college will be stimulated.

The college is indebted to an alumnus, Dr. Carey P. McCord, of Cincinnati, Ohio, for furnishing the amount of money necessary to defray the expense of printing this issue. It is expected that other alumni will contribute toward the printing of special bulletins in the future.

JOHN C. DAWSON, President.

from
J. Q. Adams

Shakespeare and The Troy Story

History of the Troy Story from the Time of Homer to Shakespeare

The story of the siege of Troy has gripped the hearts and imaginations of great poets and artists throughout the ages since Paris gave his momentous decision on Mount Ida. There is no story known to the human race so fraught with glamor, romance, heroism, adventure, and love as this powerful story of a far off age when gods fought with man against his enemies. For centuries the bravery of a Hector, the fierceness of an Achilles, the beauty of a Helen has thrilled the emotions and fired the imaginations of the world's greatest minds. It has given birth to such mighty epics as Homer's *Iliad*, Vergil's *Aeneid*; to such powerful dramas as Euripides' *Troades*, and Sophocles' *Ajax*; to such delightful romances as Boccaccio's *Filostrato*, and Chaucer's *Troilus and Criseyde*; besides being an inexhaustible mine for smaller literary outputs. It is not strange, therefore, that the greatest mind of the Renaissance should be influenced by the story of Ancient Troy. In an age when classical literature was studied in all the universities, when the story of the Trojan heroes was on the lips of every one, when the people who considered themselves the descendants of the Trojan race were thronging the theatres to see the story acted again and again, it would have been singular indeed if Shakespeare had been untouched and unmoved by it. Just what Shakespeare knew about the Troy story, just what his interest in it was, just how much inspiration he received from it is a subject worthy of study. There is abundant proof that he was tremendously interested in the story, but the chief result of his interest, the play of *Troilus and Cressida*, has been the subject of many disputes among scholars. Most of them admit its power. Many dislike it and condone it as unworthy the great soul of Shakespeare. Some, even, are repelled by it, and condemn it as a deliberate degradation of one of the world's most beautiful stories. However, to judge of Shakespeare's interest in the story, to understand his contribution to the vast store of literature centering about the Troy legend, and his purpose in writing on the subject, it is necessary to know not only Shakespeare and the Troy story in its primal purity and simplicity, but also to know and understand the changes and developments it underwent from the days of Homer until the time of Shakespeare. It is necessary to study also the great popularity of the subject in Shakespeare's own time.

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The Homeric story in its classic grandeur was not readily accessible to Shakespeare, because this story as no other, had received the deep impress of medievalism. Though Shakespeare may have known the Troy story according to the *Iliad*, he knew it primarily as it reached him through the many writers of the Middle Ages, and as it was spoken of, written, and acted in his own day; and this modified popular version of it naturally had a powerful influence upon him.

In tracing the development and modifications of the Troy story, it is not necessary here to discuss the treatment of it in the classical literature of Greece and Rome. Homer's *Iliad*, and the plays of Aeschylus, Sophocles, and Euripides treat the story in its earliest aspects, and are sufficiently well known to be dismissed with a word. The story was extremely popular with the Roman poets, especially with Vergil and Ovid. Vergil gives the story one of its noblest expressions in the *Aeneid*; Ovid makes use of it in the *Metamorphoses* and *Heroides*. The Romans, as well as the later nations of western Europe and the English, believed themselves to be descendants of the Trojans, hence the popularity of the story both in Roman literature and in the literature of the Middle Ages. This accounts also for the partiality shown to the Trojan heroes, and was one of the reasons why Homer, who celebrates the Greeks, was little more than a name. Those who knew him considered him unreliable. On the other hand, Vergil and Ovid were much loved in the Middle Ages.

The chief sources of the Troy story from the Christian era until the revival of classical literature, however, were the works of two spurious writers, Dictys Cretensis, and Dares Phrygius, belonging to the period of decadent Roman literature. The *Ephemeris Belli Troiani* of Dictys dates from 150 A. D. Dictys, however, was a Greek, and it was natural that the work of the Phrygian, Dares, inferior though it was, should be preferred by a people who believed they were descended from the Trojan race. Dares is mentioned by Homer in the fifth book of the *Iliad*, and is supposed to have been an eye-witness of the Trojan war. His *Historia De Excidio Troiae*, however, belongs to the sixth century. Though it claims to be a translation from the Greek, in reality the Latin manuscript is the original. (Dares and Dictys are the first writers to do away with the supernatural element of the story. They leave out the gods to whom Homer and Vergil had given such prominence.) Most of the later versions of the Troy story, however, may be traced directly to the *Roman de Troie* of Benoit de Sainte-More, the work of a poet of

Northern France, written in 1184, and a reworking of Dares, Dictys, and Ovid. Benoit's contribution to the story was the medieval atmosphere. This was the natural outcome of the times, for it was an age when chivalry was at its height, when the adventures and exploits of knights in the service of their fair ladies were the popular themes of literature. The story of the siege of Troy lends itself admirably to the ideal of chivalry. It is a story, primarily, of love and adventure, one grand and long battle for a beautiful and beloved woman. So Benoit makes chivalrous knights out of Achilles, Hector, Paris, and Ulysses. Achilles refrains from battle because of love for Polyxena. Troilus and Diomedes contend in knightly encounters for Cressida. Troilus in true knightly fashion wears the glove of his lady, and she treasures a sleeve from him. The Trojan heroes shine in medieval armor, and challenge the Greeks to single combats to prove their ladies more beautiful than those of Troy. This impress of medieval chivalry was so deeply stamped upon the Troy story by Benoit that all his successors follow suit. Even in the days of the revival of the classics, we meet with medieval knights in the plays of Shakespeare and Heywood.

To Benoit also must be allowed the credit for the invention of the Troilus-Cressida episode, one of the most popular episodes of the Troy cycle of stories. Troilus is merely mentioned in Homer. Vergil tells of his death as "infelix puer." In Dictys, Troilus is made prominent as a warrior, and Briseida (or Creseyde) is given some importance, but there is no relation between the two. Briseida probably represents the combination of two personages of Homer's *Iliad*, Briseis, the beautiful slave whom Achilles and Agamemnon quarreled over, and Chrysis, the daughter of the prophet, Chryses. In his long narrative, Benoit makes an interesting episode of the Troilus-Cressida theme. He gives more prominence, however to the Cressida-Diomedes theme, and the Troilus-Cressida part is merely introductory. It remained for Boccaccio and Chaucer to develop this episode into a well-rounded love story. They make the Troilus-Cressida episode the main story, and the Cressida-Diomedes episode is treated merely as a sequel.

In 1287, Guido Delle Colonne made a prose translation of Benoit in very poor Latin, called *Historia Destructionis Troiae*. He refers repeatedly to Dares and Dictys as sources, but scholars have proved his work to be no more than a translation of Benoit. The work of Guido was the immediate source of many versions of the Troy story

in German, Dutch, Icelandic, Spanish, French, and Italian. Raoul Lefevre translated it into French as *Recueil des Histoires de Troie*. This became one of the most important versions for English literature, largely because of Caxton's translation.

From Guido, Boccaccio received the material for his *Filostrato*, the first artistic treatment of the Troilus-Cressida theme, and elaborated it into a charming Italian romance, adding much to the love story, and developing the characters from wooden figures into real people. The camp scenes, with their warring heroes, which are the main interest in former versions, sank into the background. Italian manners and customs were introduced, thus making the story a typical Italian romance. He created the character of Pandarus, who plays an important part in all later treatments of the Troilus-Cressida story. In the *Filostrato* he is a gay young Florentine gentleman, the bosom friend of Troilus and cousin of Griseida. He encourages the love between Troilus and Griseida, but does not have the scheming nature of the old uncle in Chaucer's story.

It was from Boccaccio that Chaucer got his inspiration for *Troilus and Criseyde*, the first English treatment of the Troy story of any importance. There had been a Middle English poem, *The Siege of Troye*, by an unknown writer, and a Latin work, *De Bello Troiano*, by an English monk, Joshep of Exeter, but these had no influence on later English writers. (Chaucer's *Troilus and Criseyde* is one of the most beautiful narrative poems of its kind in the English language.) It is the story of a great love betrayed, the history of a passion that is deep and permanent in Troilus, but light and transient in Criseyde. It is not a picture of Trojan life in a heroic age, but the courtly love of a gallant and chivalric time. The Italian influence is noticeable in the amorous atmosphere of the poem. Like Boccaccio, Chaucer made the love story all important. The other events of the Trojan siege are mere incidents in the plot, and do not have a vital relation to the main story. Though Chaucer followed the general outline of Boccaccio's plot, two-thirds of the poem is his original contribution. He elaborated and enlarged his material. Boccaccio simply relates how Griseida after much urging, yields of her own accord to the love of Troilus. She is represented as little more than a fickle beauty, yet she is made attractive by the delicate way Boccaccio handles the theme. He tells the story as a sentimentalist; Chaucer makes his Criseyde more ideal. She is the weak but almost innocent victim of circumstance. The events leading to her surrender to Troilus' love are more

elaborate and less capable of being controlled by herself than in Boccaccio. She is trapped by the plotting and intrigue of her uncle, and is herself more or less blameless. She scarcely consents of her own will, but is apparently a chaste and modest woman betrayed by circumstances. The Griseida of Boccaccio is more amorous than the Criseyde of Chaucer, yet she is not a wanton, for her life until she knew Troilus had been decorous and blameless. She is more consistent than Criseyde. Boccaccio has made her of the passionate and amorous type, hence her later amour with Diomedes is more easily comprehended than the greater falseness of Criseyde.

Chaucer made another important innovation in the character of Pandarus. He changes him from the gallant young cousin of Griseida and friend of Troilus' own age to the half humorous and loose-principled old uncle of Criseyde. He is still a fervent friend of Troilus, and the dubious part he plays in bringing the lovers together gives adequate room for his later development into the low comedy character of Shakespeare's play. In Chaucer he is an old sentimental proverb-quoting go-between. He has all the questionable traits of his office and is far from being the "trustworthy, true-hearted old uncle" which Miss Porter¹ calls him.

The next important version of the Troy story in English was the Troy-Book of John Lydgate. In 1414 he began the laborious task of translating Guido's *Historia Destructionis Troiae*, finishing it in 1420. Lydgate's is perhaps the best and most artistic treatment of the story as a whole in the English language. It is written in decasyllabic couplets, and is exceedingly beautiful in places. Lydgate professedly translated Guido, but he dealt with his subject with true sympathy and clear poetic insight, and ornamented and enlarged the story. The finished poem is an immense work. It is divided into five books, and contains over 30,000 lines. The first book deals with the expedition of the Argonauts, and the first destruction of Troy by Hercules; the last book deals with the various adventures of the Greek heroes after the final destruction of Troy at the close of the ten years' siege. The poem gives a detailed description of Troy, Priam and his illustrious family, the causes of the war, the long siege, and the final triumph of the Greeks. Lydgate, however, adds nothing to the Troilus-Cressida story, but refers his readers to Chaucer for authoritative details on this subject. The originality, and essentially English genius of Lydgate is apparent throughout the poem. There is a de-

¹ Charlotte Porter, *Sources of Troilus and Cressida in First Folio Edition*.

cided tendency to add to the story moral reflections and criticisms which lead to later development of characters in a direction entirely different from the original classical conception. Lydgate continues the medieval atmosphere contributed by Benoit. The classical features have been replaced by medieval chivalry. Knights in armor usurp the places of the Trojan and Greek heroes. Knightly adventure takes the place of heroic exploits. Gradually the story loses its awe-inspiring grandeur, and its godlike men become mere human beings. We no longer stand aloof in awful admiration of them, but approach them as mortals. A certain reverence is lost for classical antiquity. The story is no longer the magnificent conception of Homer, but is a medieval tale of romance and adventure. The story under Lydgate's hands even takes on English characteristics. English ideals of morality creep in which lead to severe reprimands of Helen and Cressida. Lydgate, however, is not original in this. Guido is extremely fond of condemning women in general because of the fickleness and inconstancy of Helen and Cressida. Lydgate translates Guido's long discourses on the general worthlessness of women, yet he adds that he does not agree with Guido, and proceeds to give a warm defense of women, for, says he, they are not all like Helen and Cressida, and he does not hate women as Guido does. Accordingly he condemns Helen and Cressida from a sense of moral duty, and not as a woman-hater. These naive digressions from the main story are very frequent and interesting. The tendency, however, to moralize and sermonize on the moral issues of the story is one of the reasons why the story of the Trojan war was treated with such lack of reverence by later writers. The plain facts apparent to the English mind are, that Helen and Cressida are loose women wholly undeserving of the many lives lost for them, and that the heroes are stupid and foolish to spend ten years in such an unworthy pursuit. Thus, little by little, the beauty, the glory, the romance, and the grandeur dies away from the story, and cruel realism takes its place, as in Shakespeare's *Troilus and Cressida*. All this, certainly, Lydgate did not do, but, with Chaucer, he paved the way for its subsequent development.

About fifty years later, William Caxton translated Raoul Leferve's *Recueil des Histoires de Troie* into English prose. This is not nearly so artistic, nor even so good a work of its kind as Lydgate's *Troy-Book*, but it proved more popular. It went through many editions, and became the favorite source of the Troy story for later poets. It is an extensive work, yet not so voluminous as Lydgate's. The

first book deals with the reigns of Saturn and Jupiter, the beginnings of Troy, and the deeds of Perseus. The second book tells of the feats of Hercules and his two destructions of Troy. The third book treats what is usually called the Troy legend, the last and final destruction of Troy by the Greeks after a siege of ten years. The story of Helen and Paris, the wonderful deeds of the Trojan and Greek heroes, the fall of Troy through strategy, the death of Agamemnon, and the wanderings and death of Ulysses are related in the style of history. The Troilus-Cressida story occupies little space, and Caxton, as did Lydgate, refers the reader to Chaucer for details. Both thus recognize Chaucer as the chief authority on the love story.

In the 1532 edition of Chaucer by Thynne, a sixth book, written by Robert Henryson, was added to the poem of *Troilus and Criseyde*. This was a most important work for the Troy story, and had more influence on the later poets and dramatists of this particular theme than any other one work. Henryson takes up the story where Chaucer leaves off—he calls the sixth book *The Testament of Criseid*. He briefly relates the events following Cresseid's falseness to Troilus. Diomedes soon tires of her and casts her off. She, forced by cruel circumstances, becomes a common woman in the Grecian camp. Her father is the keeper of the temple to Venus and Cupid. Here the miserable Criseid goes one day and in a secret place in the temple bitterly reproaches Venus and Cupid for her misfortunes. While here she falls into a deep sleep and dreams that the gods in council decide to inflict punishment upon her for her falseness. She awakes to find the dream a reality, for she has become a leper. Horrified and grief-stricken, she calls her father. Realizing that she is incurable, he sends her to the spital house. Here she spends the rest of her life among the lepers, her youth gone and her beauty polluted by loathsome disease. One day as she sits by the roadside begging, Troilus rides by. Something about the eyes of this poor creature reminds him of his lost love, Cresseid, and impulsively he gives her gold. Later finding this generous knight to be Lord Troilus, she is overcome with grief and truly repents of her unfaithfulness to him. She bewails her fate, and as death is approaching she makes her testament, sending to Troilus a ruby ring he had once given her, and commending her spirit to Diana, the goddess of chastity. When Troilus hears of her pitiable death he sorrowfully erects a beautiful tomb over her in memory of his love.

This poem of Henryson is a powerful representation of the con-

sequences of such an evil career as Cresseid led. It is a worthy conclusion to Chaucer's story, meting out poetic justice to Cresseid for her inconstancy. Henryson, like Chaucer, artistically and sympathetically handles the subject, pitying Cresseid, and sorrowfully rather than vindictively, portrays the inevitable end to such a character. Nothing, however, could be farther from the classical treatment of such a theme. The method of development is wholly English.

Though Chaucer and Henryson had dealt with the story sympathetically, and though their readers feel sorrow and pity, not hatred and contempt, for Cresseid, later writers who merely told the facts without the artistic and tender treatment soon brought the story down to a common level. Cressida becomes the prototype of all that is unlovely and unchaste in woman. Looseness and frivolity in woman was characterized by "Cressid's kind." Pandar became a common noun synonymous with all that is contemptible in a go-between. The story thus loses its power and appeal.

Mr. Rollins considers the words of Chaucer's Criseyde as prophetic:

Allas! for now is clene ago
My name of truth in love for ever mo!

Allas, of me, unto the worldes ende
Shall neither been y-written nor y-songe,
No good word, for this bokes will me shende
O, rolled shall I been on many a tongue!
Throughout the world my belle shall be ronge.¹

This is a true foreshadowing of the fate of Criseyde. Her falseness was emphasized, and the extenuating circumstances were gradually ignored by later writers.

In some of the early sixteenth century literature, however, Cressida was celebrated as the highest type of sweetheart. In the lyric poetry of the times she was used as a comparison of beauty and grace, and exalted as a kind mistress who granted favor to her lover. Mr. Rollins attributes this to the fact that most writers, tired out with the long narrative of Chaucer, stopped at the climax, unaware of Criseyde's later falseness to Troilus; or if they read all the poem, they chose for poetic purposes to ignore the last part.

But the early Elizabethans were influenced by Henryson's conception of the story. He and Chaucer had made the romance of

¹ Chaucer, *Troilus and Criseyde*, Book V. Stanzas 151-2.

Troilus and Cressida the most popular part of the Troy legend. As the latter poets took only the facts into consideration, and the facts of Chaucer without his sympathetic atmosphere are brutal, the story of Troilus and Cressida sank lower and lower, and gradually lost the beauty and appeal that Chaucer gave to the theme. Henryson's conception of Cressida as a common woman of the Greek camp and as a loathsome leper, colored the later renderings of the story: The reputation of Cressida soon became so vile that Troilus lost much of his nobility and grandeur.

John Skelton, in the early part of the sixteenth century, summarizing Chaucer's story, expressed a poor opinion of Troilus, and refers to Cressida and Pandarus as nothing less than common characters. Thomas Howell advises young ladies thus:

To Vertue, therefore, do yourselves applie
Call Cressid's life unto your youthful minds.¹

Later, following Henryson, he refers to her leprosy, speaks of "Cressid's cursed steps." Tuberville in the poem, *In Utter Despair of his Ladie's Return, in each Respect Compares his Estate with Troilus*, has the same conception of Cressida as that of Henryson. He tells his love that though she has proved untrue, he prays she may never meet the cruel fate of Cressida.

In his *Posies* (1575), George Gascoigne often makes use of the Troilus-Cressida story. In his *Praise of his Mistress*, showing the evil results of loving beauty instead of character, he cites the ill luck of Paris and Troilus. His own mistress, because of her worthiness, is much more beautiful than Helen, Cressida, or Dido. Another time when he accuses his love of disloyalty, he says:

Some Diomede is crept into Dame Cressid's heart,
And trusty Troilus now is taught in vain to playne his part.

At this date "Cressid's kind" was a stock expression:

Not seldom seen in kits of Cressid's kind and:
How she claimed Cressid's heir to be.

In the poem *Dan Bartholomew, his First Triumph*, Gascoigne bitterly condemns Paris and Helen, and continues with one of the most cruel characterizations of Cressida that can be found anywhere:

¹ Howell, *New Sonnets and Pretty Pamphlets*.

Thy brother Troylus eke that gemme of gentle deeds,
 To think how he abused was, alas my heart it bleeds!
 Whom crafty Cresside mockt too much
 Yet fed him still with words,
 And God he knoweth, not I, who pluckt her first sprung rose

Here Gascoigne makes Cressida a deliberate wanton even in her relation to Troylus. Again he refers to "Cressid's kind."

I found naught else but tricks of Cressid's kind.

Whetstone, in the *Rock of Regard*, expresses the same opinion of Cressida as Gascoigne does. *Willobie, His Avis* in praise of chastity has Avis say:

Though shameless callets may be found
 That soil themselves in common field,
 And can carry the whore's rebound
 To strain at first, and after yield
 Yet here are none of Cressid's kind
 In whom you shall such fleeting find.

Again Avis replies to her tempter:

I come not of Dame Cressid's kind.

Thus, by the time of Shakespeare, "Cressid's kind" was an expression familiar to all, and was applied to the common and unfaithful women.

The Popularity of the Troy Story in Shakespeare's Time

The Troy story became exceedingly popular with the Elizabethan writers. This was due not only to the beauty of the story, to the prominence given it by early English writers, and to the belief that the British were descendants of the Trojans, but also to the great interest manifested in the study of the classics. The stories of Homer, Vergil, and Ovid were becoming familiar in the original as well as through translations. In 1560 Thomas Phaer translated nine books of the *Aeneid*. The work was finished by Thomas Twyne (1573). Richard Stanyhurst translated the first four books in 1582. Arthur Golding made his famous translation of Ovid's *Metamorphoses* in 1567. The same year Tuberville translated Ovid's *Heroides*. In 1581 ten books

of Homer's *Iliad* were translated from the French by Arthur Hall. In 1598, Chapman translated seven books of the *Iliad*. The same year he published *Achilles' Shield*, taken from the eighteenth book of the *Iliad*. The remaining books of the *Iliad* were finished by him in 1612. Plays of Euripides, Sophocles, and Seneca on the Troy story were also being translated at the universities. Thus, the Troy story was becoming well known to English writers, both in its original sources and in its later development. Hence, a combination of influences were brought to bear upon the Elizabethan treatment of it. Some of the facts were taken from Homer, more from Vergil and Ovid; all were permeated by the medieval ideal of chivalry, and more or less modified by English ideals of morality.

The popularity of the Troy story in the Elizabethan age is attested to by the large number of treatments of the subject in both dramatic and non-dramatic works. There were at least twenty-five plays, and four non-dramatic works of some note, to say nothing of numerous short poems dealing with some episode of the Troy cycle. I shall first discuss some of the most important non-dramatic works.

In 1589 George Peele's *Tale of Troy, The Beginning Accidents and End of Fall of Troy* was printed. He called it an "old poem of mine," so it was probably written earlier, perhaps while he was still at the university, for it shows the marks of an inexperienced hand. The poem contains about five hundred lines written in rough ten syllable couplets. The whole of the Trojan war, causes and results, is summed up. The main part of the poem is taken from Caxton's *Recuyell of the History of Troy*. The dream of Hecuba shows a familiarity with Ovid's *Heroides*. The account of the treachery of Sinon, and the fall of Troy is based on Vergil's *Aeneid*. *The Tale of Troy* is not very important from a literary point of view, but it shows the general interest in the Troy story.

About the same time another of the "University Wits," Robert Greene, treated the story in his characteristic way in the novel, *Euphues His Censure to Philautus*, "wherein is presented a philosophical combat between Hector and Achilles, discovering in four discourses interlaced with diverse delightful tragedies, the vertues necessary to be incident in every gentleman: had in question at the siege of Troy betwixt sondry Grecian and Trojan lords: especially debated to discover the perfections of a soldier." The novel is a series of long tales told by Trojan and Greek cavaliers and ladies at two social meetings during one of the long truces of the war. The three Trojan

ladies are Andromache, Cassandra, and Polyxena. Greene had much difficulty in finding three corresponding ladies among the Greeks. He chooses Iphigenia, who, according to fact, was sacrificed at the beginning of the war, Briseis, the slave whom Agamenon and Achilles quarreled over, and as the third, Cressida, who was in reality a Trojan. This, however, was no stumbling block to Greene. The first banquet takes place at the Grecian camp, where the courtly knights welcome the Trojan party; the second banquet, on the following night, is at Ilium, where Priam in state royally entertains the Greeks. The glamor and enchantment Homer threw around his heroes is effectively dispelled by the gay repartee of the dinner party. The godlike heroes of Homer are replaced by gallant gentlemen discussing in euphuistic fashion the topics of the day. The smoother and flattering Greeks impartially distribute extravagant compliments to the Trojan ladies. Ulysses elaborately blames Trojan men for seeking and keeping Helen when they have such lovely and wonderful women at home. Iphigenia and Andromache descend to an undignified dispute about the relative merits of the Greek and Trojan women, Andromache maintaining that the Trojan women are excellent housewives, and Iphigenia that the Greeks are more learned and cultured. Andromache retorts that Helen is an example and result of Greek culture and learning. At this point the subject is deftly changed and the heroes indulge in long tales to beguile the time.

The Troilus-Cressida story is only touched upon slightly. Cressida spends the time between the first and second banquet dreaming about the superior qualities of Troilus, and there is the suggestion of a growing love between them. Greene does not give a very favorable impression of Cressida. She is witty and interesting, but gay and flippant. She does not hesitate to interrupt the majestic flow of Ulysses' oratory:

"Cressida interrupts, tickled a little with a self-conceit of her own wit, willing to let the Trojans know the phrase of her speech was as fair as the form of her face, and that woman's tongue pierced as deep as their eyes."

She is a mere coquette in spite of her brilliance.

Nothing could be farther from the classical conception of the Troy story than this novel of Greene's. There is nothing of classical simplicity and sublimity in this ornate and artificial representation of the heroic age. The mere shell, the names of the heroes and the

place of action may belong to ancient Troy, but otherwise the story is of courtly Elizabethans discussing philosophical problems in a half serious way. This novel proves the general interest in the legend of Troy, also adequately illustrates to what extent medieval and renaissance conceptions had taken the place of the classical atmosphere. It also shows the irreverent manner in which classical material was often treated. The Elizabethans manifested much love and interest, but little veneration and awe for the lofty theme of Homer.

Thomas Heywood was particularly interested in the classics and especially in the Troy legend. Besides his play, *The Iron Age*, he wrote a comprehensive poem on the subject, *Troia Britanica*. He also in his *Nine Books of Various History Concerning Women* refers to many of the female personages connected with the Trojan war and incidentally characterizes several of the heroes. Helen is mentioned as the cause of the war. Her beauty is described (Book V, p. 216). She is spoken of as the murderess of Deiphobus, whom she had married after the death of Paris (Book V, p. 217). She was stolen from Sparta to avenge the wrongs of Hesione, rather than because of Paris' love for her (Book IX, p. 423). Cassandra is called poetess and prophetess (Book VIII, p. 286). Hecuba is represented as avenging the death of her young son, Polydore, (Book VII, p. 322). Electra, daughter of Agamemnon, is represented as compassionate for her brother, Orestes. Clytemnestra is false to Agamemnon with Aegisthus. The two murder Agamemnon on his return from the fall of Troy (Book VII, p. 353). Briseis, the slave, is mentioned as having won the love of Achilles because of her extraordinary beauty (Book V, p. 245). Penthesilia, "she that in ayd of Priam (or so some say for love of Hector) came to the siege of Troy with a thousand ladies, where after many deeds of chivalry by her performed, she was slain by the hands of Achilles, or as most will have't by Neoptolemus." The episode of Penthesilia and her amazons made a profound impression upon Heywood. In the second part of the *Iron Age* he dramatizes the fierce combat of the Amazons against the Greeks and the death of Penthesilia. In the *Troia Britanica* he again relates the same event. In his work *The Exemplary lives and Memorable acts of Nine of the Most Worthy Women of the World*, he makes Penthesilia one of the immortal Nine.

Heywood's *Troia Britanica* is by far the most important non-dramatic work dealing with the Troy story in the Elizabethan period. The poem is "divided into XVI several Cantons intermixed with many

pleasant poetical tales, concluding with an universal chronicle from creation until the present times. A brief epitome of chronicle even from first man unto us, this second time created Britons, with a faithful register, not only of memorable things done in Troy and this Island, but of many and most famous accidents happening throughout the world."

Heywood's own analysis is suggestive of the scope of the poem. He wishes to emphasize the tradition that the Britons were descendants of the ancient Trojans. By loose and often far-fetched links, he joins ancient and Elizabethan episodes. The poem has over thirteen thousand lines, and for the most part is written in *ottava rima*. The interest is fairly well sustained throughout, and the verse is exceptionally good for so long a poem. The author relates the mythological history of Troy, traces the name of Britons from Adam to Queen Elizabeth, discusses the Golden Age and the subsequent reigns of the gods, describes the founding of Troy by Dardanus, praises the reign of James I, compares Queen Elizabeth to the chaste Diana, celebrates the exploits of Sir Francis Drake, compares the fight of Sir Richard Grenville to the battle with the centaurs, and so throughout the poem, connects the modern Trojans with their ancient ancestors. The siege of Troy he describes in detail. After the fall of Troy, he traces the wanderings of Aeneas, the grandfather of Brutus, who came to Albion and founded New Troy (London). The poem closes with a list of English rulers from Brutus to Queen Elizabeth. Throughout, Heywood seeks to exalt England. It is a testimonial not only to his ability as a poet but also to his exultant patriotism. The poem shows that Heywood was familiar with both Lydgate and Caxton, and cites as his specific sources Dares and Dictys, Homer, Ovid, Vergil, and Chaucer.

The Life and Death of Hector, by an anonymous writer, should also be mentioned as showing the popularity of the Troy story. This is a long poem of over thirty thousand lines, uninteresting, and poorly written. It covers much of the same ground as *The Troia Britannica*. Mr. J. S. P. Tatlock¹ characterizes it as a "big bad book," and states that it is a slavish adaptation of Lydgate's *Troy-Book*.

The dramatic treatment of the Troy story of the Elizabethan age may be considered in two groups, first plays performed by students at the universities, and second, plays performed by professional actors

¹ J. S. P. Tatlock, *The Siege of Troy in English Literature Especially in Shakespeare and Heywood*, in *PMLA*, vol. 30.

in the London theatres. Most of the university plays were either translations of the classic plays on the Troy theme, or plays written in Latin, and following the classic versions of the story.

In 1559, *Troas*, translated from Seneca by Jasper Heywood, was acted by the students at Oxford. The play deals with events immediately following the fall of Troy, the episodes of Andromache and Astianax and the sacrifice of Polyxena on the tomb of Achilles. The ghost of Achilles plays an important part in the play and had a great influence over later imitators.

In 1564 *Dido*, a Latin tragedy, was acted at Cambridge for the entertainment of Queen Elizabeth on her visit to the University, who "about nine o'clock came, as the night before, to a play called *Dido*, which was exhibited and played by and at the charge of the company of King's College."

The Latin translation of Sophocles, *Ajax Flagellifer*, was to have been acted before the Queen during this same visit to Cambridge, but owing to some unexplained cause she did not hear it "to the great sorrow, not only of the players, but of the whole University."² However, it was acted at Oxford in 1605.

In 1566, J. Studley, a student of Trinity College, Cambridge, translated the eighth tragedy of Seneca, *Agamemnon*. The whole story of the Trojan war is briefly related. The first part of the war, the sailing of the Greeks to Troy, the sacrifice of Iphigenia, and the story of Briseis, is told by Clytemnestra. The latter part of the war and the fall of Troy are related by Cassandra, who has been brought to Greece by Agamemnon.

In 1571, *Iphigenia*, "a tragedie was shown on the Innocent daie at night by the children of Poule."³

In 1576, a translation of Euripides' *Iphigenia* was made by George Peele at Oxford. In 1576 or 1577 a prose translation was made by Lady Lumley.

In 1583, *Dido*, a Latin tragedy by William Gager was acted at Christ's Church, Oxford.

In 1591, another play by Gager, *Ulysses Redux*, a Latin tragedy was acted at Christ's College.

In 1623, *Orestes*, a tragedy by Goffe, was acted by the students of Christ Church, Oxford. The prologue was spoken by the author.

¹ J. Nichols, *Progresses and Public Processions of Queen Elizabeth*. Vol. I., p. 179 (2d edition).

² *Ibid.*

³ Cunningham, *Revels at Court in Reigns of Elizabeth and King James I*, p. 13.

In 1625, *Fuimus Troes or The True Trojans*, by Jasper Fisher, was acted. "The True Trojans being a story of the Briton's valor at the Roman's first invasion—publickly represented by the gentlemen students of Magdalene College in Oxford." Though this play does not deal at all with the Troy story, it emphasizes the tradition that the Britons were descendants of the Trojans, and helps explain the partiality always shown to the Trojan heroes to the disparagement of the Greeks.

If the students at the Universities were interested in dramatizing the Troy story, the popular dramatists were even more so. Their efforts, however, followed more closely the English development of the story. There was less of the classical atmosphere in their productions, which of course is to be expected of the popular drama.

One of the earliest popular handlings of the story is an interlude called *Thersites* in 1537. "This interlude following doth declare how that the greatest boasters are not the greatest doers." Outside of the name Thersites, and the braggart speech suggestive of Homer's *Thersites*, with which Thersites introduces himself, the interlude is wholly English. The plot has nothing to do with the Troy story. The importance of the interlude is due to the fact that it foreshadows the later development in the character of Thersites in Heywood and Shakespeare. The writer of the interlude was evidently acquainted with Homer in some form, for he has Thersites, the cowardly boaster, introduce himself as follows:

Have in a ruffler forth of the Greek land
 Called Thersites, if you will me know:
 Aback, give me room, in my way ye do not stand,
 For if ye do I'll soon lay you low.
 In Homer of my acts, ye have read I trow:
 Neither Agamemnon nor Ulysses I spared to check.
 They could not bring me to be at their beck.
 Of late from the siege of Troy I returned,
 Where all my harness, except this club, I lost.

In 1563, *The History of Dido and Aeneas* was acted at Chester upon the Sunday after Midsummer's day.

In 1572, *Ajax and Ulysses*, one of the most popular episodes of the Troy story, was "shoven on New Year's daie at night by the children of Wynsor."¹

Another favorite theme was made use of in *The Masque of the Amazons*, "in all armor compleate,"² given at court in 1579.

¹ Cunningham, *Revels at Court*, p. 13.

² *Ibid.*, p. 125.

In 1583, *The Arraignment of Paris*, "was presented before the Queen's Majestie by the children of her chappell." This is a beautiful pastoral by George Peele, dealing with the story of Paris and Ænone, the decision in favor of Venus as the fairest of the goddesses, and his subsequent arraignment before the gods, who decree that as punishment he shall bring ruin upon himself and his people, thus foretelling the Trojan war.

In 1584, *The History of Agamemnon and Ulysses* was "presented and enacted before her Majestie by the Earl of Oxenford's, his boys, on St. John's Daie at Night at Greenwiche."

In 1591, *Dido Queen of Carthage*, a tragedy by Marlowe and Nash was played by the children of her Majestie's chappell. The plot follows Aeneas's story to Dido of the fall of Troy, the episode of the cave, Aeneas's desertion of Dido and her tragic death. The play is based on the *Aeneid*, and is a work of no little importance and power.

In 1596, a play called *Troy* was acted by the Lord Admiral's Men. It is mentioned in Henslowe's Diary. Greg thinks it was probably an earlier and shorter version of Heywood's *The Iron Age*, which was later expanded into a two-part play.

In 1598, *Dido and Aeneas*, a play belonging to the Admiral's Men, was acted at the Rose. Greg offers the suggestion that it may have been the play referred to in *Hamlet* that was "caviare to the general."

In 1599, *Agamemnon*, a tragedy by Dekker and Chettle, *Orestes Furies*, and *Troilus and Cressida*, also by Dekker and Chettle, were acted by the Admiral's Men. These plays are all mentioned in Henslowe's Diary.

In the period between 1596 and 1602, the Troy story seems to have been at the height of its popularity on the stage. It was at this time that Shakespeare made his contribution to the stage versions of the Troy legend. Heywood's *Iron Age* seems to have been later. These two plays I shall discuss further on.

In 1615, the masque, *Ulysses and Circe*, by William Brown was acted at the Inner Temple.

In 1618, The Amazonian Masque was to have been presented before the King and Queen, but for some reason the King did not allow it to be given.

The *Death of Dido*, a masque, is mentioned in Halliwell-Phillip's *Dictionary of Old Plays*. Nothing is known concerning it.

The Contention of Ajax and Ulysses, by Shirley, was "nobly rep-

¹ *Ibid.*, p. 188.

resented by young gentlemen of quality at a private entertainment of some persons of honor." This play deals with the famous contention over Achilles' noted armor.

Edmund Gayton, in *Festivious Notes on Don Quixote*, mentions a play called *Greeks and Trojans* (acted c. 1625-42).¹

"A poor butcher, seeing Hector overpowered by Myrmadons, leaped upon the stage and with his bludgeon took the Trojan part so valiantly, that he routed the Greeks, and then took such a fancy to Hector that for a long time he could not obtain leave to be killed, that the play might go in, for the vanquished Myrmadons would not venture to enter again until Hector prevailed on his unexpected second to quit the stage."²

This account illustrates the fact that the Troy story on the stage was always partial to the Trojan heroes. Even the ignorant butcher showed his preference for his ancient ancestor, Hector.

I have already shown to some extent the marked interest Thomas Heywood had in the story of Troy. His *Troia Britanica* was the greatest non-dramatic contribution to the story in the Elizabethan period, and his play, *The Iron Age*, was the greatest dramatic representation of it, if we omit Shakespeare's *Troilus and Cressida*. *The Iron Age* in two parts, was an ambitious work, concerning the whole Troy story from the council of the Trojans in which they decide that Paris may carry Helen from Sparta to avenge the wrongs of Hesione, to the fates of the Greek heroes after the fall of Troy. In his dedication to Mr. Thomas Hammon, Heywood explains why he undertook such a great task. He was sure that the subject was worthy of dramatic treatment. "The history whereon it is grounded having been the selected argument of many exquisite poets. For what pen of note in one page or other hath not remembered Troy, and bewayl'd the sack and subversion of so illustrious a city; which although it were scituate in Asia, yet out of her Ashes, hath arisen two of the rarest phoenixes in Europe, namely London and Rome."

Heywood thus had two reasons for writing. It was a subject that the greatest poets of the world had written about, and it was also a subject that every Englishman should be interested in.

The Iron Age was the sequel to three other plays, *The Golden Age*, *The Silver Age*, and *The Brazen Age*, all dealing with classical mythology. The first three plays give the events from the birth of Jupiter

¹ The *Festivious Notes* was published in 1554. Schelling, in *The Elizabethan Drama*, places the date between 1625-42.

² Edmund Gayton, *Festivious Notes* (1768), p. 4.

to the death of Hercules. *The Iron Age* begins where *The Brazen Age* leaves off. In his preface to the reader Heywood states that these plays had been very popular on the stage and were "publickely acted by two companies upon one stage at once and have at sundry times thronged three severall theatres with numerous and mighty auditories."

Prof. J. Q. Adams¹ shows the efforts of Shakespeare and Heywood to familiarize the middle classes of London with the Greek classics. As to *The Iron Age* having been acted by two companies in three different theatres, Prof. Adams points out that this could only have been accomplished by the combination of Heywood's and Shakespeare's companies. Shakespeare's company, The King's Men, had at their disposal the two theatres, The Globe, and The Black Friars, while Heywood's company, The Queen's Men, occupied the Red Bull, hence the two companies together could make use of three theatres, and no other combination of two companies could do so. These companies, we know, had combined for the presentation of *The Silver Age*, and it is most likely they cooperated in giving *The Iron Age*. The large number of major characters in the play, and the need for many stage properties, would make this desirable. If this is true, then Heywood and Shakespeare were associated in popularizing the classical stories. The combination of these two greatest troupes of actors in London shows the importance and success of the plays. Heywood states that they were often performed, and were well received by the public.

The Iron Age, in two parts, opens with a war council in Troy. Paris is granted permission by King Priam and his lords to seize some noble lady of Greece to avenge the wrongs done to Hesione, the sister of Priam. Cassandra warns the Trojans against this, but is ignored. Paris, after repulsing Œnon, sails to Greece, wins the love of Hellen, wife of Menelaus, King of Sparta, and in the absence of her husband, carries her back to Troy with him.

Act II opens with a love scene between Troilus and Cressida, followed by the welcoming of Hellen and Paris to Troy. The first encounter of the Trojans and Greeks takes place. Hector gives his famous challenge and is met by Ajax. The combat takes a chivalric turn and the act closes with the invitation of Priam to the Greek lords to banquet in Troy.

The first part of the third act is taken up with the banquet. Cressida decides to desert Troilus and death in Troy for Diomed and life at the Grecian camp. Menelaus and Paris contend for the love of

¹ J. Q. Adams, *Shakespeare, Heywood, and the Classics*. In *MLN*, vol. XXXIV., p. 336.

Hellen. Paris is a second time successful, and the Greeks leave the banquet swearing vengeance upon the Trojans. The rest of the act deals with the numerous encounters on the battlefield. Achilles refrains from battle because of his love for Polixena; but at last the death of his friend, Patroclus, and the many bold deeds of Hector arouse him to action.

The fourth act deals with the death of Hector, Troilus and Achilles. The fifth, with the contention of Ajax and Ulysses for the armor of Achilles. The play closes with the suicide of Ajax because of the awarding of the armor to Ulysses.

Part II of *The Iron Age* contains the deaths of Penthesilia, who had come to the aid of Troy with her Amazons, Paris, Priam, and Hecuba; the burning of Troy; the deaths of Agamemnon, Menelaus, Clytemnestra, Hellen, Orestes, Aegisthus, Pilades, King Diomed, Pyrrhus, Cethus, Synon, Thersites, and others. This shows the extensive scope of the play. There is a vast amount of material woven into dramatic form. The time covers over ten years. Because of the many episodes treated, the play lacks unity. Former dramatists had chosen some one dramatic incident, like the contention of Ajax and Ulysses, or the sacrifice of Iphigenia. On the other hand, Heywood tried to dramatize the whole Troy story, and considering his material, he succeeded admirably, though there are many weak places.

The Troilus-Cressida love story is just one of the many episodes in the plot. The development of it is not clearly worked out. Cressida's actions are not well motivated. The first appearance of the lovers occurs in the second act of Part I, where they swear eternal love and loyalty. They next appear at the banquet scene, where with little hesitation Cressida, at her father's advice, decides to desert Troilus for Diomed. Later on, Troilus and Diomed quarrel, and we find from this that there had been a previous engagement between them, and that Troilus had been unhorsed by Diomed, and his horse had been sent to Cressida. In the present fight, Troilus is successful, and captures Diomed's helmet, which he sends to Cressida. In the fourth act, Troilus is killed. Nothing more is heard of Cressida until the first act of Part II. Here she forsakes Diomed for Synon, and consequently is deserted by both of them. She makes her last appearance in the third act, stricken with leprosy. This comes as a great surprise, for there has been nothing to prepare one for this develop-

ment. Heywood is merely following the historical treatment of the story.

Heywood's use of the Troy story shows a great variety of sources. The banquet scene is reminiscent of Greene's *Euphues, His Censure to Philautus*. The contest of Paris with Menelaus for Hellen goes even farther than Greene in dispelling the classical atmosphere. Thersites is taken from Homer, the burning of Troy and flight of Aeneas, from Vergil. Heywood relates practically the same events that he handled in *The Troia Britania*, in which he quotes as sources, Homer, Vergil, Ovid, Chaucer, Dares and Dictys. There is also no doubt that he made use of Lydgate's *Troy-Book*, for the medieval atmosphere clings to all the characters.

PART I

Shakespeare's Use of the Troy Story

After tracing in its general outline the Troy story from Homer to the Elizabethan period, and after studying to some extent the great popularity of the story in Shakespeare's time, we can now turn with some degree of confidence to Shakespeare's treatment of it. The fact that most of the references to the Troy story occur in his earlier plays, and that *Troilus and Cressida* was written at the time when the story was at its height of favor with the Elizabethans, shows that Shakespeare was not uninfluenced by its popularity. Our purpose is to discover if possible whether Shakespeare was vitally interested in the Troy legend, or whether his contribution was merely the result of popular enthusiasm for the story. What did he know about it? What use did he make of it? How did the story appeal to him? Did it occupy an important place in his poetic imagination? What was his conception of the story? What were the sources of his information? In order to determine all this I shall first take up the episodes of the Troy story which seem to stand out most prominently in his mind; secondly, I shall discuss some of his more important allusions to the Greek and Trojan heroes, and then analyze the play of *Troilus and Cressida*. From these references to the story, and from the play, I shall attempt to determine Shakespeare's conception of it as a whole. In conclusion, I shall endeavor to determine the sources he made use of.

The episodes of the Troy story which appealed most to Shakes-

peare, and those which he portrays with truest feeling and tenderest sympathy, are those dealing with the misfortunes of the Trojans at the final overthrow of Troy by the Greeks. The contemptible treachery of Sinon, which gave the city into the hands of the Greeks; the burning of the magnificent city; the death of King Priam; the sorrow of Hecuba; the flight of Aeneas with old Anchises on his shoulders from the flaming city, form in the mind of Shakespeare a complete picture of one of the world's most tragic stories. It is not so much the number of references to these events as it is the vividness in painting them that shows Shakespeare's sympathetic interest in the fate of Troy.

Sinon's treachery made a vivid impression on Shakespeare's mind. In the wall painting of the Trojan war so effectively described in the *Rape of Lucrece*, Sinon stands out as the important figure. Lucrece, in contemplating the "painted woes" of Troy, characterizes Sinon as the most despicable of all the Greeks when she compares him to the cruel and treacherous Tarquin, who had betrayed both friendship and hospitality. He, like Tarquin, was not a villain in appearance but was a consummate master of subtlety and deceit.

In him the painter labour'd with his skill
 To hide deceit and give the harmless show
 An humble gait, calm looks, eyes waiting still,
 A brow unbent that seemed to welcome woe,
 Cheeks neither red nor pale, but mingled so
 That blushing red no guilty instance gave,
 Nor ashly pale the fear that false hearts have.

But like a constant and confirmed devil
 He entertain'd a show so seeming-just,
 And therein so ensconced his secret evil,
 That jealousy itself could not mistrust
 False-creeping craft and perjury should thrust
 Into so bright a day such black-faced storms
 Or blot with hell-born sin such saint-like forms.¹

Sinon is nothing short of a magician to be able to cloak so vile a heart with so honest an outward appearance.

With outward honesty, but yet defil'd
 With inward vice.²

¹ *Luc.* lines 1506-19.

² *Ibid.* lines 1544-45.

His wit, his cleverness, and his art as an actor are contrasted with the unsuspecting and guileless character of good old Priam.

Look, look, how listening Priam wets his eyes,
To see those borrowed tears that Sinon sheds!
Priam, why art thou old and yet not wise?
For every tear he falls a Trojan bleeds;
His eyes drop fire, no water thence proceeds:
Those round clear pearls of his that move thy pity,
Are balls of quenchless fire to burn thy city.¹

No wonder the credulous old Priam was captured. Sinon's tale is enchanting. He is a master of wise deceit. This same characteristic of Sinon is brought out in the reference in *Titus Andronicus*. After Titus has killed his daughter and Tamora, and in turn has been killed by Saturninus, Marcus turns to Lucius and asks him to explain to the people the cause for all the slaughter:

Tell us what Sinon hath bewitch'd our ears.²

In *Cymbeline*, Imogen, when falsely accused of unfaithfulness, charges her husband with having covered his true purpose in wishing her death. He has succeeded so well in deceit that hereafter:

All good seeming

By thy revolt, O husband! shall be thought
Put on for villany.³

She compares the evil result of such an action with that of the false Greek:

Sinon's weeping

Did scandal many a holy tear.⁴

Gloucester, in his soliloquy on the possibility of obtaining the crown, states his treacherous aims thus:

I'll play the orator as well as Nestor,
Deceive more slyly than Ulysses could,
And like a Sinon take another Troy.⁵

¹ *Luc.* lines 1548-54.

² *T. A.* v. 3.85.

³ *Cym.* iii. 4. 54.

⁴ *Ibid.* iii. 4. 59.

⁵ *3H6* iii. 2. 188.

Through the treachery of Sinon Troy was finally betrayed and burned:

For perjur'd Sinon, whose enchanting story
The credulous old Priam after slew;
Whose words like wildfire burnt the shining glory
Of rich-built Ilion, that the skies were sorry,
And little stars shot from their fixed places,
When their glass fell wherein they viewed their faces.¹

Shakespeare thought of Troy as a magnificent city, beautiful and strong, "Priam's six-gated city," shut up "with massy staples and corresponsive and fulfilling bolts." The burning of this wonderful city in the stillness of the night greatly appealed to his imagination. After Sinon had been received in full faith by the Trojans, and the huge wooden horse "stuff'd within with bloody veins," had been haled into the city amid the shouts of the rejoicing and unsuspecting populace after the celebration of the supposed departure of the Greeks, all Troy for the first time in ten years sank care-free into rest. The whole city lay quiet, shrouded in darkness. Upon this scene the flames burst forth. Shakespeare describes the night in the second part of *Henry VI*—when Bolingbroke, the conjurer, calls up the spirit for the Duchess, he wants a night as dark as that when Troy was captured:

Deep night, dark night, the silent of the night
The time of night when Troy was set on fire.²

The solemn atmosphere of woe of that fatal night as pictured in the second part of *Henry IV*. Morton enters, trembling and grief-stricken, to announce to the Earl of Northumberland the death of his son:

Even such a man, so faint, so spiritless,
So dull, so dead in look, so woe-begon,
Drew Priam's curtain in the dead of night,
And would have told him half his Troy was burn'd;
But Priam found the fire ere he his tongue.³

¹*Luc.* lines 1521-26.

²*H6.* i. 4. 17.

³*H4.* i. 1. 10.

Shakespeare emphasizes the darkness of the night, and the fact that the Greeks treacherously took Troy by surprise:

The story of that baleful burning night
When subtle Greeks surprised King Priam's Troy.¹

Titus Andronicus exclaims in agony to his son who reminds him of his daughter's loss of her hands:

Ah! wherefore dost thou urge the name of hands,
To bid Aeneas tell the tale twice o'er
How Troy was burnt, and he made miserable?²

In *Hamlet*, Hecuba is mentioned as running barefoot up and down among the flames. Ascanius is represented as telling to Dido:

His father's acts commenced in burning Troy.³

Titus Andronicus in the excess of his grief seemingly could hear no more, but when Lavinia appears handless, cries out:

What fool hath added water to the sea
Or brought a faggot to bright burning Troy?⁴

In *Lucrece*, the burning of Troy is referred to several times:

This load of wrath that burning Troy doth bear.⁵

Had doting Priam check'd his son's desire
Troy had been bright with fame and not with fire.⁶

Two other events of this baleful night when Troy was sacked by the Greeks, are sympathetically treated by Shakespeare. One is the murder of old Priam and the other is the overwhelming sorrow of Hecuba. The murder of Priam, venerable with age, by the cruel and hot youth Pyrrhus is told in detail in *Hamlet*. The young prince of Denmark tells the actor that in a certain play there was one speech he chiefly loved, "'twas Aeneas' tale to Dido." He asks the player to begin at the line about Priam's slaughter. Hamlet himself begins the speech:

¹*T. A.* v. 3. 82.

²*T. A.* iii. 2. 26.

³*H. A.* iii. 2. 118.

⁴*T. A.* i. 1. 69.

⁵*Luc.* lines 1474-76.

⁶*Luc.* lines 1490-92.

The rugged Pyrrhus, he, whose sable arm,
 Black as his purpose, did the night resemble,
 When he lay couched in the ominous horse,
 Hath now this dread and black complexion smear'd
 With heraldry more dismal; head to foot
 Now is he total gules; horridly trick'd
 With blood of fathers, mothers, daughters, sons,
 Bak'd and imparted with the parching streets
 That lend a tyrannous and damned light
 To their vile murders: roasted in wrath and fire,
 And thus o'er-sized with coagulate gore
 With eyes like carbuncles, the hellish Pyrrhus
 Old grandsire Priam seeks.

The player then takes up the story and finishes the description of Priam's death:

Anon he finds him

Striking too short at Greeks: his antique sword
 Rebellious to his arm, lies where it falls,
 Repugnant to command, unequal match'd,
 Pyrrhus at Priam drives: in rage strikes wide:
 But with the whiff and wind of his fell sword
 The unnerved father falls. Then senseless Ilium,
 Seeming to feel this blow, with flaming top
 Stoops to his base, and with a hideous crash
 Takes prisoner Pyrrhus' ear: for lo! his sword,
 Which was declining on the milky head
 Of reverend Priam seem'd i' the air to stick:
 So, as a painted tyrant, Pyrrhus stood,
 And like a neutral to his will and matter,
 Did nothing.
 But, as we often see, against some storm,
 A silence in the heavens, the rack stand still,
 The bold winds speechless and the orb below
 As hush as death, anon the dreadful thunder
 Doth rend the region; so, after Pyrrhus' pause,
 Aroused vengeance sets him new awork;
 And never did the Cyclops' hammers fall
 On Mar's armour, forg'd for proof eterne,
 With less remorse than Pyrrhus' bleeding sword
 Now falls on Priam.¹

Then follows a wonderful description of Hecuba:

¹ *Ham.* ii. 2. 450 ff.

But who, O! who had seen the mobled queen . . .
 Run barefoot up and down threatening the flames
 With bisson rheum: a clout upon that head
 Where late the diadem stood; and for a robe,
 About her lank and all o'er teemed loins,
 A blanket, in the alarm of fear caught up;
 Who this had seen with tongue in venom steep'd,
 'Gainst Fortune's state would treason have pronounc'd:
 But if the gods themselves did see her then,
 Where she saw Pyrrhus make malicious sport
 In mincing with his sword her husband's limbs,
 The instant burst of clamor that she made—
 Unless things mortal move them not at all—
 Would have made milch the burning eyes of heaven,
 And passion in the gods.¹

Here the player breaks off in his recital, overcome by grief at the picture he has drawn. It was in such a way that the story of the grief-stricken old Hecuba affected Shakespeare himself. Every time he mentions Hecuba her age and her grief stand out as her chief characteristics. In the *Rape of Lucrece*, he represents Lucrece looking at the painting for some face where distress and grief alone are painted:

But none where all distress and dolor dwell'd
 Till she despairing Hecuba beheld,
 Staring on Priam's wounds with her old eyes,
 Which bleeding under Pyrrhus' proud foot lies.

In her the painter had anatomized
 Times ruin, beauty's wrack and grim care's reign:
 Her cheeks with chaps and wrinkles were disgu'd;
 Of what she was no semblance did remain:
 Her blue blood chang'd to black in every vein,
 Wanting the spring that those shrunk pipes had fed,
 Show'd life imprison'd in a body dead.²

She is painted with a countenance so expressive of woe, that Lucrece feels that the painter has done her a wrong not to have given her a tongue with which to express so much grief. In *Titus Andronicus*, Hecuba is spoken of as having run mad because of sorrow. Again in *Cymbeline* she is characterized as "madded Hecuba."

In all the turmoil of that last night of Troy, another picture stands out conspicuously in Shakespeare's mind—that of Aeneas car-

¹ *Ham.* ii. 2. 505.

² *Luc.* lines 1444-56.

rying out on his shoulders the aged Anchises. Cassius, in relating to Brutus the rescue of Caesar, says:

I, as Aeneas, our great ancestor,
Did from the flames of Troy upon his shoulder
The old Anchises bear, so from the waves of Tiber
Did I the tired Caesar.¹

Young Clifford, bearing out the dead body of his father, sees in the act a resemblance to that of Aeneas:

As did Aeneas old Anchises bear
So bear I thee upon my manly shoulders
But then Aeneas bore a living load,
Nothing so heavy as these woes of mine.²

The story of the fall of Troy as told by Aeneas to Dido is often referred to. Hamlet says that there was "one speech in it I chiefly loved; 'twas Aeneas' tale to Dido."

When with his solemn tongue he did discourse
To love-sick Dido's sad attending ear
The story of that baleful burning night.³

The desertion of Dido by Aeneas aroused Shakespeare's sympathy for the unfortunate queen. In this connection he speaks of the "false Aeneas." In *Cymbeline*, Imogen puts Aeneas in the same class with Sinon as synonymous with treachery and deceit. Queen Margaret, feeling that she has been deceived as Dido was, asks—

Am I not witch'd like her? Or thou
Not false like him?⁴

In *A Midsummer-Night's Dream*, Hermia promises to meet Lysander at the appointed time, and swears many an oath by way of emphasis. She refers thus to the "false Aeneas":

And by that fire which burned the Carthage Queen,
When the false Trojan under sail was seen.

¹J. C. i. 2. 112.

²H6. v. 2. 62.

³T. A. v. 3. 80.

⁴H6. iii. 2. 119.

⁵M. N. D. i. 1. 173.

A most beautiful and tender picture of Dido's love for Aeneas is given in the *Merchant of Venice*:

In such a night
 Stood Dido with a willow in her hand
 Upon the wild sea-banks and waft her love
 To come again to Carthage.¹

In the *Tempest*, there are several humorous allusions to "widow Dido" and "widower Aeneas." In *Romeo and Juliet* Dido is mentioned as beautiful but in comparison with Romeo's love is a "mere dowdy"!

Besides these important episodes of the Troy story that stand out conspicuously in Shakespeare's works, there are many definite references, and several vague allusions to various heroes and events of the war.

Strangely enough, the greatest hero of the Greek side, Achilles, is only mentioned three times outside of *Troilus and Cressida*, and these are rather indefinite allusions. In *Love's Labour's Lost*, the comic characters are presenting the nine worthies before the King, the princess and their attendants. When Hector makes his appearance as one of the worthies, Berowne exclaims:

Hide thy head Achilles, here comes
 Hector in arms.²

This merely conveys the idea that Hector is a foe whom Achilles should fear. In the second part of *King Henry VI*, Achilles, spear is spoken of as having magic power:

Whose smile and frown like to Achilles' spear,
 Is able with the change to kill and cure.³

The famous spear is again mentioned in *The Rape of Lucrece*:

That for Achilles' image stood his spear,
 Griped in an armed hand, himself behind
 Was left unseen, save to the eye of mind.⁴

Agamemnon, the Grecian commander-in-chief, is almost ignored

¹*M. of V.* v. 1. 10.

²*L. L. L.* v. 2. 625.

³*2H6.* v. i. 101.

⁴*Luc.* line 1424.

by Shakespeare. He is little more than a figure-head in *Troilus and Cressida*, for he is not fully characterized. In the third part of *Henry VI*, he is spoken of as Menelaus' brother. The term 'magnanimous' is applied to him in *Henry V*.

The Duke of Exeter is as magnanimous as Agamemnon.¹

This characterization means nothing at all, for magnanimity was no special trait of the classical or medieval Agamemnon. Menelaus did not interest Shakespeare either. Of all the Greek heroes in *Troilus and Cressida*, he plays the smallest part.

Ajax, however, made a deep impression upon Shakespeare. Stupidity and madness are his main traits. In *The Rape of Lucrece*, he is contrasted with the mild and clever Ulysses:

In Ajax' eyes blunt rage and rigour roll'd.²

In *Love's Labour's Lost*, Ajax is to be presented as the ninth worthy. Kent, in *King Lear*, when out-argued by Cornwall and Oswald, sees himself in the same position Ajax was in when outwitted by the unscrupulous and crafty Greek heroes:—

None of these rogues and cowards
But Ajax is their fool.³

When the famous armor of Achilles was given to Ulysses instead of to Ajax, Ajax became enraged, went mad, and finally committed suicide. Shakespeare alludes to this episode several times. His slaughter of the cattle in his madness is humorously made use of by Berowne in *Love's Labour's Lost*:—

By the Lord, this love is as mad as
Ajax: it kills sheep: it kills me,
I a sheep.⁴

In the second part of *King Henry VI* York, leading a rebellion against the King, exclaims in his anger:—

Scarce can I speak, my choler is so great
O! I could hew up rocks and fight with flint,
I am so angry at these abject terms
And now, like Ajax Telamonius,
On sheep and oxen could I spend my fury.⁵

¹*H. V.* iii. 6. 7.

²*Luc.* line 1398.

³*Lear*, ii. 2. 123.

⁴*L. L. L.* iv. 3. 7.

⁵*2H6.* v. 1. 23.

Ajax's suicide is referred to in *Titus Andronicus*:

The Greeks upon advice did bury Ajax
That slew himself.¹

Ulysses who plays such an important part in *Troilus and Cressida*, is scarcely mentioned outside of this play. In the third part of *King Henry VI*, Warwick and his followers plan to capture King Edward in the night:

As Ulysses, and stout Diomed
With sleight and manhood stole to Rhesus' tents,
And brought from thence the Thracian fatal steeds.²

An indirect reference is made to Ulysses in *Coriolanus*. Vergilia, who refused to go out in the absence of her husband, is compared with Penelope, who stayed at home and spun in Ulysses' absence. A more direct characterization is given in *The Rape of Lucrece*:

But the mild glance that sly Ulysses lent
Show'd deep regard and smiling government.³

Nestor, in Shakespeare, has two prominent characteristics, age and eloquence. Gloucester says:

I'll play the orator as well as Nestor.⁴

His age is emphasized in the speech of Mortimer, who compares his advanced age with that of Nestor:

And these grey locks, the pursuivants of death
Nestor-like aged, in an age of care
Argue the death of Edward Mortimer.⁵

His wisdom and authority as a judge is attested in *The Merchant of Venice*. Salario, in describing the strange fellows framed by Nature, says that there are some of such sour dispositions—

That they'll not show their teeth in a smile
Though Nestor swear the jest be laughable.⁶

¹*T. A.* i. 1. 378.

²*H6.* iv. 2. 19.

³*Luc.* lines 1398-1400.

⁴*H6.* iii. 2. 188.

⁵*H6.* ii. 5. 5.

⁶*M. of V.* i. 1. 54.

The King, in *Love's Labour's Lost*, who has fallen in love contrary to his vow, and who had made himself ridiculous in condemning others for the same offense, is laughed at by Berowne who tells him his action is as undignified as Nestor's would be if he should "play at push-pin with the boys." Nothing could be more ludicrous for the venerable old counselor to do.

His age, his wisdom and power of persuasion are forcefully described in *The Rape of Lucrece*:

There pleading might you see grave Nestor stand,
As 'twere encouraging the Greeks to fight,
Making such sober action with his hand,
That it beguil'd attention, charmed the sight;
In speech, it seemed, his head, all silver white,
Wagged up and down, and from his lips did fly
Thin winding breath, which purl'd up to the sky.
About him a press of gaping faces
Which seemed to swallow up his sound advice;
All jointly listening, but with several graces,
As if some mermaid did their ears entice.¹

Hector, the most valiant of all the Trojan heroes, is referred to many times, but his sole characteristic seems to be bravery. He is a bold warrior, a type of heroism. Antony commends his soldiers—"You have shown all Hectors." King Henry VI calls Warwick "My Hector, My Troy's true hope." In *Much Ado About Nothing*, Don Pedro speaks of Benedick as being as "valiant as Hector." Doll Tear-sheet tells Falstaff that he is as "valorous as Hector, worth five of Agamemnon." The Host calls Caius "Hector of Greece, my boy." The countess on seeing Talbot the first time, exclaims in disappointment that she had expected to see a "second Hector." The last stand of the Duke of York against his foes is compared to the stand Hector made against the Greeks when they would have entered Troy. The boldness and courage of Hector is emphasized in Anfidius' challenge to Marcius to fight:

Wert thou the Hector
That was the whig of your bragg'd progeny,
Thou shouldst not 'scape me here.²

Volumnia chides Valeria for her horror of blood and battle. To

¹ *Luc.* lines 1401-11.

² *Cor.* i. 8. 12.

show that blood spilt in a righteous cause is beautiful, she cites Hector's brave deeds:

the breasts of Hecuba
When she did suckle Hector, looked not lovelier
Than Hector's forehead when it spit forth blood
At Grecian swords, contemning.¹

In *The Rape of Lucrece*, Hector is called "Manly Hector" and "brave hope, bold Hector." In *Love's Labour's Lost*, he is presented as one of the worthies. Armada armed as Hector, calls forth many humorous remarks from his audience. Hector is characterized as "heir of Ilion," "worthy knight of Troy," and "brave Hector."

Troilus is named as one of the patterns of love by Rosalind:

Troilus had his brains dashed out by a Grecian club:
yet he did what he could to die before, and he is one of the
patterns of love.²

The romance of the Troilus-Cressida story is beautifully interpreted in the Love scene of Jessica and Lorenzo:

The moon shines bright: in such a night as this,
When the sweet wind did gently kiss the trees,
And they did make no noise; in such a night
Troilus, methinks, mounted the Trojan walls,
And sigh'd his soul toward the Grecian tents,
Where Cressid lay that night.³

A less romantic allusion is made to Cressida in *Twelfth Night*. The clown calls her a beggar. A reference to her as a leper is made by Pistol in *King Henry V*:

No: to the spital go,
And from the powdering tub of infamy
Fetch forth the Lazar kite of Cressid's kind.⁴

There are only three direct references to Pandarus outside of *Troilus and Cressida*. In *Twelfth Night*, the clown makes use of the popular conception of Pandarus:

¹Cor. i. 3-40.

²As. iv. 1. 93.

³M. of V. v. 1. 1.

⁴H5. ii. 1. 76.

I would play Lord Pandarus of Phrygia, sir, to bring a Cressida to this Troilus.¹

Pandarus' office is again spoken of in *All's Well that Ends Well*:

I am Cressid's uncle
That dare leave two together.²

Pistol in *The Merry Wives of Windsor* exclaims:

Shall I Sir Pandarus of Troy become,
And by my side wear steel?³

Paris is merely mentioned as the lover of Helen. Neither he nor Helen appealed deeply to Shakespeare. They are both mentioned in *The Rape of Lucrece* as the cause of the Trojan War:

Show me the strumpet that began this stir,
That with my nails her beauty I may tear
Thy heart of lust, fond Paris, did incur
This load of wrath that burning Troy doth bear:
Thy eye kindled the fire that burneth here.
And here in Troy, for trespass of thine eye,
The sire, the son, the dame and daughter die.⁴

In *All's Well That Ends Well*, Helen is again spoken of as cause of the war:

Was this fair face the cause, quoth she,
Why the Grecians sacked Troy?⁵

Shakespeare, however, often makes use of Helen as a type of beauty:

On Helen's cheek all art of beauty set.⁶

The lover all as frantic
Sees Helen's beauty in a brow of Egypt.⁷

Nature presently distill'd
Helen's cheek but not her heart.⁸

Helen of Greece was fairer far then thou.⁹

¹*Tw. N.* iii. 1. 52.

²*A. W.* ii. 1. 99.

³*M. W.* i. 3. 76.

⁴*Luc.* lines 1470-78.

⁵*A. W.* i. 3. 71.

⁶Sonnet 53, line 7.

⁷*M. N. D.* v. 2. 11

⁸*As.* iii. 2. 144.

⁹*HF6.* ii. 2. 146.

Shakespeare makes use of these references to the Troy story to heighten the effect of his verse. He embellishes his poetry with pleasing illustration, similes, and metaphors. He seldom makes an inappropriate application of the story. If he wished an example of bravery, Hector immediately arose in his mind. If he wanted a passionate lover, Troilus was chosen. If he wished to describe the most perfect feminine beauty, he used Helen as a comparison. If he wanted an illustration of unscrupulousness and slyness, he made use of Ulysses. If he wished an example of anger or madness, he took Ajax; if falseness, Aeneas; if perjury, Sinon; if old age and wisdom, Nestor; if kingly dignity, Priam; if extreme sorrow, Hecuba; if looseness and fickleness in woman, Cressida. His most elaborate use of the story is the famous painting in *The Rape of Lucrece*.

In the play, *Troilus and Cressida*, Shakespeare's interest in the siege of Troy finds its fullest expression. When the play was first printed it was stated on the title page that it had been acted by the King's Men at the Globe. In later printings of this title page the statement was struck out and a preface to the reader was added, in which the play is described as new, "never slated with the stage, never clapper-clawed with the palms of the vulgar." This last is most likely correct, for it is a play more suitable for reading than for acting. It is an experiment of Shakespeare at dramatizing a story that was peculiarly fascinating to him, and was probably never intended for stage performance.

In the prologue, Shakespeare gives a brief history of the Trojan war, and points out that his play is to deal with only a brief period of the siege:

Our play
Leaps o'er the vaunt and firstlings of those broils,
Beginning in the middle; starting thence away
To what may be digested in a play.

This shows Shakespeare's skill in choice of material. For dramatic purposes he chooses the four most thrilling days of the Trojan siege. He takes the most critical and interesting point in the war, the events leading up to the death of Hector, the hope of Troy. This is the most tragic episode of the war for the Trojans. They had just been given the opportunity to return Helen and make peace, and their unwise decision makes inevitable their final doom. The love

story of Troilus and Cressida which Boccaccio and Chaucer had made so famous is the main theme, but it does not have the all-important place in Shakespeare that it does in his predecessors. Of almost equal interest is the scheme of Ulysses and Nestor to stir the proud Achilles out of his inactivity, and the challenge of Hector and his encounter with Ajax. The logical way these various themes are woven together, testifies to Shakespeare's power of unifying an intractable and unwieldy subject. He tells us in the prologue that we can like it or leave it alone:

Like or find fault; do as your pleasures are:
Now good or bad, 'tis but the chance of war.

Shakespeare seems to have realized that it would not appeal to all, but this does not trouble him. He has chosen from a mass of war material, episodic in nature, the events suitable for dramatic representation, and has unified and enlivened it by the introduction of the Troilus-Cressida love theme. He selected "what may be digested in a play," the combination of love and war. Troilus, the young hero, is defeated in both, but emerges from the experience a sadder, but a much wiser man.

II

Shakespeare's Conception of the Troy Story

Shakespeare's conception of the Troy story was more or less governed by the sources of his knowledge. He could not possibly have had the same conception of it that Homer had. Any story as powerful, as interesting, and as appealing as the siege of Troy could not have come down through the ages without great changes. Nothing is more unreasonable than to read Homer's *Iliad*, and then Shakespeare's *Troilus and Cressida*, and then say that Shakespeare, in a cynical mood, satirized the Greek heroes, made ridiculous a great epic, and maliciously poked fun at Homer himself. This might be a just criticism, if the *Iliad* and Shakespeare's *Troilus and Cressida* were the only expressions of the story, but even then, Shakespeare should have the right of interpretation and originality. But these are not the only treatments of the famous legend, and the vast number of versions must be taken into consideration. No cross-section of any period of

the story is the real story. The continuous development must be considered. The siege of Troy, as understood in Shakespeare's time, was the result of the growth of the Middle Ages, and of the Renaissance. A story that is the result of such growth can be truly interpreted only by the historical method. This is the only way that Shakespeare's *Troilus and Cressida* can be understood and appreciated. This does not necessarily mean that Shakespeare slavishly followed his sources, but it cannot be denied that he is indebted to others for the facts, and thereby in an indirect way, for his notion of them. His references to the Troy legend are more often than not, mere adaptations of sources, or apt phrasing of the current popular conceptions of some Trojan hero or event. In his play, however, Shakespeare goes beyond and deeper than any of his sources. Here he has wider scope for originality in character portrayal. But behind and through it all there is the Medieval and Renaissance conception of the siege of Troy.

I have already given the main outline of the history of the Troy story, but I wish to sum up here some of the most important results of Medieval and Renaissance treatments, in order to give a clear idea of the literary and historical traditions back of Shakespeare. There are two very prominent features in his portrayal of the story, one, the atmosphere of chivalry in the play *Troilus and Cressida*, and the other, his partiality to the Trojans. The explanation of both these features is found in the historical development of the story. The preference for the Trojans was started by Vergil. The hero of the *Aeneid* is the Trojan who founded the Roman race. Vergil, whose patriotism and pride in the great Roman Empire inspired him to write his epic, on all occasions enlists our sympathy for the Trojans. Vergil was the favorite author of the Middle Ages, and all his successors followed suit in praise of the unfortunate race. The nations of Western Europe claimed descent from the Trojans. The French chose Hector for their ancestor, the English chose Aeneas; and even the Turks claimed descent from Troilus. The English regarded their descent from the Trojans quite seriously in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. Heywood many times refers to London as New Troy, and in his *Troia Britanica* takes great pains to trace the descent of the English Kings from Aeneas down to Elizabeth. All the literature of the Middle Ages and of the Renaissance, consequently, showed great favor to the Trojans, and in so doing, changed or colored the story of

the Trojan war to suit this purpose.) The Trojans were no longer to blame for the war. Priam's sister, Hesione, had been made a slave by a Greek. Priam sends two embassies demanding her return, but the Greeks refuse. Finally, Paris, who has had a vision on Mt. Ida of a wonderful adventure for himself, suggests that some noble Greek lady be stolen by the Trojans to avenge the wrongs of Hesione. Priam and his war council consent, and Paris sails for Greece, and returns with Helen. In this way the cause of the war is laid at the door of the Greeks. This war council of Priam and the story of Hesione are related by Guido, Benoit, Leferve, Lydgate, and Caxton. There were many little turns of events introduced in the Middle Ages that were unfavorable to the Greeks; for instance, truces were demanded more often by the Greeks than by the Trojans. Achilles, who in Homer is a fierce warrior, but always manly and noble, becomes a coward and a traitor; he falls in love with Polyxena, daughter of Priam, refuses to join battle, sacrifices his patriotism to his love for his enemy's daughter, and kills Hector in a most cowardly and brutal way. Ulysses' characteristics of slyness and deceit are emphasized. On the contrary, the Trojan heroes are extolled for their superior qualities. Hector becomes the flower of chivalry. He is glorified as the most courteous, modest, and also the most valiant of all the Trojans or Greeks. Troilus grows from a mere name in Homer to an equal sharer of glory with Hector. He even steals some of his brother's laurels. He is younger than Hector, more passionate and headstrong. Ajax is made the cousin of Hector. Calchas, the Greek priest of Homer, is made a Trojan deserter and father of Cressida, who is also a creation of the Middle Ages. Many other additions and changes were made. Hector's visit to the Greek camp was added, and the circumstances of his death altered from those related by Homer. The removal of the gods was another important change of the Middle Ages. That, and the introduction of chivalry, dispelled the classical atmosphere entirely. That intangible something that makes for grandeur and sublimity was eliminated. The war became a game, an exercise in knightly adventures. We shall later see how these changes and additions made by Medieval and Renaissance writers are used by Shakespeare.

We have already stated that the legend of Troy was at its height of popularity on the English stage between 1592 and 1602. It is in this period that Shakespeare uses the story most in his plays, and at

the close of this period he wrote *Troilus and Cressida*. It is probable that Shakespeare's interest in the story was aroused by its popularity on the stage at this time. We know that he wrote sonnets because the sonnet was a popular form of literature. He began writing plays because that was what most literary men were turning their attention to. He began writing historical plays, because a historical play of a rival company had taken London by storm. It seems most natural, then, that one reason why Shakespeare wrote *Troilus and Cressida* was that the general public at this time was extremely interested in anything relating to the siege of Troy.

The Troy story was not only available to Shakespeare through the Renaissance treatment of it and as it was acted on the stage in his day, but the original sources were also open to him. There had been two English translations of Homer that he could have used. Golding's translation of Ovid's *Metamorphoses* was one of his favorite books. Then there is no doubt that Shakespeare read Ovid and Vergil in the original. Thus there was a combination of influences brought to bear upon Shakespeare's conception of the story. Some of his references to the siege of Troy have a purely classical atmosphere; some express merely the popular notion of it, and others the medieval conception. At times there is a combination of all three colored by Shakespeare's own ethical ideals and original interpretation.

Shakespeare gives the truest classical atmosphere in the references to the death of Priam and the sorrow of Hecuba in *Hamlet*, and in the picture of the final overthrow of Troy as found in *The Rape of Lucrece*. Both these are adaptations of the second book of Vergil's *Aeneid*, which accounts for the lack of the chivalric influence which is found to be so prevalent in *Troilus and Cressida*. Vergil wins our entire sympathy for the ruined city and conquered race, and Shakespeare preserves this feature. In *Hamlet*, the story is told with love and pity for the unfortunate house of Priam, and with scorn for the cruel Pyrrhus, who represents all the fierceness and cruel-heartedness of the Greeks. In *The Rape of Lucrece* the same feeling of overwhelming pity for Priam and the Trojans is aroused. Priam in his simple credulity is representative of the idealism of the Trojan race, just as Sinon is an example of Greek craftiness, subtlety and treachery. The trusting, kind-hearted old Priam and his soldiers are taken in by the more clever but deceitful Greeks. Shakespeare's conception of the whole Greek race is summed up in the words of Gloucester, who

characterizes three of their representatives as clever artificers:

I'll play the orator as well as Nestor,
Deceive more slyly than Ulysses could,
And like a Sinon, take another Troy.¹

Shakespeare conceived of this final night as a great tragedy, a highly civilized race, of which the venerable Priam and noble Hector are representative, overthrown in the moment of seeming victory by the crafty means of a deceitful Greek. Sinon plays the part of the villain in this powerful drama. He is a most subtle and contemptible villain, who with tears and lamentations, tells a most pitiable tale, which destroys a city. The nation is overthrown by strategy, not conquered. Shakespeare has complete sympathy for this sad event. The Trojans are represented as the nobler, better race, but they are by no means perfect. Here Shakespeare makes his own comment on the war. It is magnificent in its result, but extremely foolish in its beginning. Priam's tragic death was the immediate result of Sinon's treachery, but it was none the less caused by Priam himself. He brought ruin on himself and his people by not checking the cause of the war:

Had doting Priam check'd his son's desire,
Troy had been bright with fame and not with fire.²

Shakespeare felt deeply the tragic force of the last days of Troy, but the story of Helen and Paris had no allurements for him. Helen, outside of the two characteristics of beauty and falseness, has no interest for him. Paris is condemned as weak, selfish, sensual, and ignoble. Many people have puzzled their brains over the question why Shakespeare did not make a great tragedy out of the Helen-Paris story as he did of the Antony and Cleopatra plot. Shakespeare would probably have answered that he could have done so had he desired to re-create Paris and Helen, transform them into personages entirely different. Helen, as Shakespeare pictured her to himself, was physically beautiful but shallow and frivolous, and Paris had none of the stuff in him that tragic heroes are made of. In Antony and Cleopatra, on the contrary, he had great, powerful, and highly intelligent personages to deal with.

¹ 3H6. iii. 2. 188-90.

² Luc. lines 1490-92.

In the *Rape of Lucrece*, Shakespeare sums up the cause of the war as lust—the same conception he gives of it in *Troilus and Cressida*. This idea of the foolishness and futility of such a war necessarily destroys some of its gripping power as a story. A certain amount of dignity and grandeur is taken away from the heroes. Shakespeare's ethical ideals here lead him to depart to some extent from the Vergilian conception of the majesty of the war. The moral wrong of Helen and Paris has led to the senseless waste of innocent lives.

Show me the strumpet that began this stir,
That with my nails her beauty I may tear.
Thy heart of lust, fond Paris, did incur
This load of wrath that burning Troy doth bear:
Thy eye kindled the fire that burneth here;
And here in Troy for trespass of thine eye,
The sire, the son, the dame and daughter die.

Why should the private pleasure of some one
Become the public plague of many more?
Let sin, alone committed, light alone
Upon his head that hath transgressed so:
Let guiltless souls be freed from guilty woe:
For one offence why should so many fall,
To plague a private sin in general?

Lo! here weeps Hecuba, here Priam dies,
Here manly Hector faints, here Troilus swoonds,
Here friend by friend in bloody channel lies,
And fiend to fiend gives unadvised wounds,
And one man's lust these many lives confounds.¹

Shakespeare's conception of Aeneas has more of the classical notion in the references outside of *Troilus and Cressida*, but in the play he is a cross between an Elizabethan courtier and a medieval knight. Vergil is the source of the allusions. All hope is not lost for the survival of the Trojan race. Aeneas with old Anchises on his shoulder steals out of the burning city and flees to foreign lands to establish anew the race of Priam. His desertion of Dido in Vergil takes none of the nobility of character from him, for he leaves her at the will of the gods; but under Shakespeare's pen Aeneas loses some of his nobler qualities. Shakespeare introduces the "false Aeneas" who deserted a constant and loving woman, and thus turns all our sympathy to Dido.

To explain Shakespeare's conception of *Troilus and Cressida* is

¹ *Luc.* lines 1471-89.

difficult. There have been more different interpretations of the play than of any other of Shakespeare's. Some scholars call it his most brilliant masterpiece, others find it the least worthy, and there are various other opinions ranging between these two extremes. Either interpretation finds much plausibility, depending upon the viewpoint of the reader. Every one agrees that it is baffling to the understanding. This is a testimony to the greatness and complexity of the play. To some it is as puzzling as the riddle of the Sphinx, and as insoluble as the smile of Mona Lisa. Coleridge¹ says there is no one of Shakespeare's plays that is harder to characterize, while Swinburne² speaks of the "insolubly enigmatic *History of Troilus and Cressida*." Others find no difficulty in fitting it into a theory, even while admitting its perplexing nature. Perhaps one way of finding out what *Troilus and Cressida* means is to find out what it does not mean. According to the most noted critics, it may have different and entirely antagonistic meanings. All these interpretations of it can not be correct. By a process of elimination, the least plausible theories may be rejected, and by a comparison of the others with the facts, some tangible and reasonable conclusion may be reached.

Some of the most important theories of interpretation of *Troilus and Cressida* are: first, that it was a contribution to the war of the theatres in which Shakespeare satirized his rivals; secondly, that it was a malicious degradation of the Homeric story caused by jealousy of Chapman and the rising popularity of the classics; thirdly, that it was the result of Shakespeare's personal history, producing a cynical and satirical viewpoint; and lastly, that it was the natural outgrowth of the long history of the story.

Scholars no longer hold the theory advanced by Fleay, that it was a satire on the dramatists of the day. It would take a vivid imagination to see the play in this light. That *Troilus and Cressida* is a deliberate travesty of the classics caused by Shakespeare's jealousy of the "rival poet," Chapman, is an interpretation held by several critics. Schlegel calls it a parody designedly made of the Greek epic as translated by Chapman. Ulrici has the same opinion. Furnival calls it a "deliberate debasing of that Homer Chapman englisht." Furnival gives as proof for this belief the fact that in *Lucrece* due reverence is paid to the Greeks, while in *Troilus and Cressida* an entirely different attitude is shown toward the Greek leaders. He

¹ S. T. Coleridge, *Lectures and Notes on Shakespeare* (1818-1829).

² A. C. Swinburne, *General Introduction to the Works of Shakespeare*.

says that if the poem and play be set side by side, the entirely different tone in the two will be obvious.¹ When Shakespeare wrote *Lucrece* he had one attitude toward the Greeks, but after the translation of Homer by Chapman, he changed his viewpoint entirely; in other words, that Shakespeare out of jealousy belittled the heroes of Homer. On the surface, this explanation seems reasonable, but Furnival fails to note that partiality is shown to the Trojans in *Lucrece* to the disparagement of the Greeks, and this cannot be explained by Chapman's translation of Homer. Then the main characteristics of the Greeks of *Lucrece* are not changed in *Troilus and Cressida*. Ulysses is given the epithet "sly." He has absolute self-control, "smiling government." These are the qualities elaborated in *Troilus and Cressida*. Nestor occupies a favorable enough place in the play, not different in essential qualities from the Nestor of *Lucrece*. The "blunt rage and rigour" of Ajax is enlarged upon in *Troilus and Cressida*, with the emphasis on the "blunt" it must be admitted. The Greeks certainly received their share of blame in the condemnation of Sinon as an exponent of Greek duplicity in *Lucrece*. Furnival does not take into consideration the sources of the two representations of the story. In the poem, the classical atmosphere of Vergil is retained to a large degree, while the atmosphere of *Troilus and Cressida* is medieval and chivalric.

Lloyd calls *Troilus and Cressida* "a profanation of Homeric poetry in the use made of the characters and incidents of the *Iliad*. . . . It is difficult at first to restrain a feeling of indignation at the travestie he thus commits himself to, of the grand characters of Ajax, Achilles, and Patroclus. . . . his boldly changing and reversing them altogether . . . Shakespeare well knew that Ajax and Achilles were not in the *Iliad* the blockheads and bullies it suits him to make them; the change was deliberate. Was it malicious? Did Shakespeare, whose deficiency in Greek was notorious, indulge himself by showing how substantially they could embody a Greek subject, taking for his experiment that of the noblest Greek the world's noblest poem, and purposely degrading and vulgarizing it?"²

Lloyd proceeds to show that Shakespeare's profanation of the classic is deliberate, but not malicious. However, he ascribes to Shakespeare the remaking of the Greek heroes. The history of the Troy story refutes this. Shakespeare cannot claim originality in the characterization of the Greek heroes in *Troilus and Cressida*. They

¹ F. J. Furnival, *Introduction to Leopold Shakespeare* 1877.

² W. W. Lloyd, *Critical Essays*. Singer's Edition. 1856.

had already emerged from Lydgate, Caxton, and Greene with all the essential features that they are endowed with in Shakespeare, whose duty it was to give them reality and animation.

One of the most unreasonable views to take of *Troilus and Cressida* is to class it as an outcome of Shakespeare's own life, the expressing of ideas suggested by his inner experiences. James Stalker says of it:

"It can not be looked upon in any strict sense as an attempt to dramatize history. It is a curious piece, and has an important value as a document in Shakespeare's personal history. It seems to have been written at a time when Shakespeare was disgusted with life and especially with the character of woman."

A. W. Verity² explains it by the title, *Troilus and Cressida*, a love story. *Romeo and Juliet* was written by a young man, who believed in love, loyalty and truth. Time brings disillusion, and Shakespeare sees there is evil as well as good in the world, and he writes a play from the opposite standpoint.

George Brandes³ suggests that it is the old sorrow of the sonnets creeping out. The Dark Lady was the first prototype of Cressida. Shakespeare later cooled down, saw the folly of loving such a creature, exclaimed "What a farce!" and immediately wrote *Troilus and Cressida*.

"He had felt as Troilus did, the honest soul, the honorable fool, who was simple enough to believe in woman's constancy."

Those who would find a solution for *Troilus and Cressida* in Shakespeare's mood at the time of writing, should be consistent in this view. According to one critic, the closing mood of the sonnets is one of bitter disillusion and disgust. Yet the writing of *Romeo and Juliet* came soon after, and was written at a time when he believed in love and constancy. He then created Portia and Rosalind. After this, all agree that he met with a second disillusionment, and vented his ill humor upon Cressida. If this is true in Cressida's case, the same theory should hold good for all of Shakespeare's heroines. He was disgusted with women when he wrote *Troilus and Cressida*, hence he

¹ James Stalker.

² A. W. Verity, *Introd. to Troilus and Cressida*. Irving Edition. 1889.

³ George Brandes, *Wm. Shakespeare—A Critical Study*.

deprived her of virtue and constancy; a little later disillusioned as to woman's intellectual powers, he refuses to give Ophelia a fair amount of brains. When he created Desdemona, he had regained his lost faith in woman's love and constancy. By the time he wrote *Macbeth* and *Antony and Cleopatra*, he was willing to return to woman her intellectual capacity, but probably somewhat disillusioned again as to her moral character, took away the lovable qualities he had given to Desdemona. He finished, however, in an idealistic mood. After his checkered life, in Imogen he embodies most of the qualities of the ideal woman.

Such an explanation of Shakespeare's heroines is most unsatisfactory. Drama indeed has a narrow scope if a literary artist can portray no passion, and present no development of character without meeting the accusation that it is the picturing of his own heart and life. This takes away Shakespeare's power to portray characters objectively. Certainly Shakespeare's heart, and especially his great mind, is to be found in his works, but his petty personal prejudices and sorrows are not allowed to color his outlook upon life, or to govern his attitude toward any of his characters. If his jealousy of Chapman, or his old sorrow of the sonnets, explain his attitude toward the Troy story, then Shakespeare is a much smaller man than these same critics would ever admit him to be.

Those who regard the play as a cynical travesty of the Homeric story are closely related to those who explain it by the personal history theory. K. Deighton speaks of the "cynical belittling, sour spirit that besmirches the whole play and seems to testify to a passing mood of morbid disgust."¹

Prof. Root sees even less beauty in it:

"If Chaucer has transformed the spirit of the story from pathetic sentimentality to half ironical humor, Shakespeare in his *Troilus and Cressida* has approached it in a spirit of bitter cynicism and blackest pessimism. The love story, which is after all subordinate to the intrigue of the Grecian camp, has neither the romance of Boccaccio, nor the humor of Chaucer; it is merely disgusting. Troilus remains much what he is in Chaucer, but Criseyda has flung away even the pretense of virtue and is merely a confessed wanton. The keen-sighted Ulysses reads her at a glance. That the generous Troilus, own brother to Romeo, should break his heart for such a woman as this is but another proof of the essential

¹ K. Deighton, *Introd. to Troilus and Cressida*. Arden Ed.

mockery of human life. Pandarus has lost all his geniality and humor and is merely repulsive. To crown all, the final worthlessness of Cressida and the breaking heart of Troilus are interpreted to us by the syphilitic mind of Thersites, whose whole function in the play is to defile with the foulness of his own imagination all that humanity holds high and sacred."¹

Swinburne says that—

"No one can deny that the key-note of the dramatic poem, the key-stone of the spiritual structure is radically and indisputably cynical."²

Dryden supposes it a satire on the inconstancy of women. This accusation of cynicism is one of the most universal criticisms of the play. It can not be denied that the first reading of the play usually brings a shock to the one who goes to the play with the Homeric siege of Troy in mind. But, as Prof. Dowden explains, it must be remembered that it is not the Homeric siege of Troy that is dramatized, but the story as it was reworked and retold in the Middle Ages. Since Shakespeare did not pretend to dramatize Homer, it is unjust to compare the story with Homer's for the purpose of explaining Shakespeare's conception of it. When read in connection with any modern version of the story, Guido, Lydgate, or Caxton, the feeling of repulsion for the play is dispelled. Coleridge³ is not surprised or shocked at Shakespeare's treatment of the theme, because he took into consideration its former versions.

"The name and the remembrance connected with it, prepare us for the representation of attachment no less faithful than fervent on the side of the youth, and of sudden and shameless inconstancy on the part of the lady."⁴

He realized its historical and traditional nature. If it is cynicism to represent life under certain conditions as it is found, then Shakespeare is cynical. Cynicism is a disbelief in rectitude and sincerity where those qualities exist. To see good where there is only falseness and duplicity is not idealism but stupidity. If *Troilus and Cressida* is an expression of cynicism, then in the outcome of the plot right must triumph over wrong, and the "eternal fitness of things"

¹ R. K. Root, *The Poetry of Chaucer*.

² A. C. Swinburne, *Introd. to the Works of Shakespeare*.

³ S. T. Coleridge, *Lectures and Notes on Shakespeare*.

must be sacrificed to the "essential mockery of human life." After all, is the fall of the Trojans due to the duplicity and more clever management of the Greeks, or to some tragic flaw in the Trojans themselves? Does not the issue lie deeper than the outward circumstance would imply at first thought?

Shakespeare in *Troilus and Cressida* arouses most antagonism because of his presenting Cressida as a deliberate coquette, and because he pictures Ajax as a dolt, and Achilles as a cowardly, conceited bully. Can Shakespeare be justified for so presenting these characters? If the fact that others so presented them can excuse Shakespeare, then he is freed from all censure.

We have already shown the development of the character of Cressida from Chaucer to Shakespeare, and shown that the popular conception of her in the Elizabethan age was that of a loose woman who suffered the hideous fate of leprosy. That Shakespeare partook of this popular notion is proved by the reference to the "lazar kite of Cressid's kind." But Shakespeare's characterization of her in the play does not go to this extreme. Benoit, who was the first to use the love story, makes Cressida fickle and coquettish. Guido follows suit, and Lydgate and Caxton preserve this same nature in their translations. In Chaucer and Boccaccio, she is more idealistic, but inconsistent. Chaucer represents her as demure, chaste and sober, and most deeply in love with Troilus, but after sixteen days at the Grecian camp she has fallen as deeply in love with Diomed. Chaucer himself professes that he can not understand it. It does pass comprehension. Shakespeare saw the inconsistency of it, so he makes her a coquette from the beginning. She has no deep capacity for love. Brandes thinks the change from Troilus to Diomed in Shakespeare takes place too quickly to be plausible, that nowhere in literature is the change made so quickly from love to treachery. He forgot Heywood, who accomplishes the change in a ten minutes conversation. Her character in *The Iron Age* has far less motivation than Shakespeare's Cressida. She is urged by her father to desert Troilus for Diomed. After a little hesitation she answers him:

Diomed and you I'll follow, Troilus shun.¹

In Lydgate's *Troy-Booke*, the time of the change is as long as in Chaucer, but her character is the same as in Shakespeare. The

¹ Heywood, *The Iron Age*, iii. 1.

moment she enters the Greek camp Diomed begins to occupy her thoughts, and she is won by him long before she yields. She puts Diomed off for coquettish reasons, just as Cressida pretends to be indifferent to Troilus in Shakespeare. She wishes to display her power of enslaving men. Love of conquest made her tarry in confessing her love for Diomed. She wishes to see if she can make him suffer by keeping him waiting, which makes her more truly one who plays with love than Shakespeare's Cressida who uses less wiles in winning Diomed. With a woman of this type the time of the change has little to do with the change. Lydgate realized this, for he says that one could not change a ducat as quickly in Lombard Street as Cressida changed Troilus for Diomed.

Shakespeare realized that a woman who could change lovers in sixteen days could do so as easily in one, so he does not pretend to make Cressida anything but a fickle beauty subject to passing fancies, which is all she is anywhere in literature, except in Chaucer and Boccaccio, and there she is inconsistent. Shakespeare realistically, not cynically, portrays her according to the traditions of the story. Cressida in Shakespeare is not an innovation as Sir Sidney Lee characterizes her—

In defiance of authorities he presented Cressida as a heartless coquette.¹

Cressida, as Shakespeare thought of her, was surpassingly lovely in physical appearance, being the rival of the beautiful Helen at the Trojan court, for she is as fair in her plainest dress as Helen is in her best.

She would be as fair on Friday as Helen is on Sunday.²

She has one advantage of Helen: she is young, with all the freshness and charm of youth at her command. Her first conversation with Pandarus shows her to be of quick and ready wit, of lively and teasing disposition. She delights in baffling both Pandarus and Troilus. This scene also proves her a thorough-going coquette. She pretends absolute indifference to Troilus. The moment she is alone, she admits her love for him, and in this soliloquy states her philosophy of love, and in so doing reveals her love merely as a thing of the senses.

¹ Sir Sidney Lee, *Shakespeare's Life and Works*.

² *T. C. i. i.* 76-78.

She refuses to be won, in order to make herself more highly prized:

Yet hold I off. Women are angels wooing:
Things won are done: joy's soul lies in the doing
That she belov'd knows nought that knows not this:
Men prize the thing ungain'd more than it is.¹

The love scene with Troilus brings out the best and the worst in Cressida. She is in love with Troilus as deeply as her shallow, frivolous nature will allow her. She uses all the wiles of a coquette in leading the timid Troilus on. She is a mixture of shrewdness and charming *naïvete*, especially practiced for the occasion. To the infatuated Troilus, she seems all modesty, timidity, and sweetness. Her sudden haltings and stammerings in the confession of her love, her seeming embarrassment at receiving a kiss she purposely provoked, would have deceived a more subtle lover than Troilus. One would be tempted to believe in her good faith if it were not for her reception at the Greek camp next morning, where she indiscriminately exchanges jests and kisses with the Greek leaders. [She shows herself worthy of Nestor's judgment,]

A woman of quick sense,²

and also equally deserving of Ulysses' condemnation. Ulysses was as quick and shrewd as she, and sized up her character immediately:

Fie, fie upon her!

There's language in her eye, her cheek, her lip,
Nay, her foot speaks; her wanton spirits look out
At every joint and motive of her body.³

She is an avowed flirt, anxious to please and attract all men she comes in contact with, hence her amour with Diomed does not come as a great shock, as something that seems contrary to nature, but with Troilus we had fears from the very beginning as to whether she would be true. Her true nature is clearly brought out in her conversation with Diomed. Her seeming reluctance to let Troilus' token go is mere pretence to arouse Diomed's interest more deeply. Once given, she would make him believe she wishes it back, but after all her protestations, she gives herself away:

¹T. C. i. 2. 297-300.

²T. C. iv. 5. 53.

³T. C. iv. 5. 54-57.

But, now that you have it, take it.¹

Diomed says he will wear it on his helm,—

And grieve his spirit that dares not challenge it.²

But Cressida knew that Troilus would challenge it, and here was a greater satisfaction to her vanity. It would prove her power to have one of the most valiant Greek knights challenged in the field by the famous Trojan because of her.

As to the Trojan and Greek heroes in Shakespeare, they can only be explained by taking into consideration the medieval atmosphere that pervades the play. The war is carried on as a game. The heroes find the battlefield a source of recreation and knightly adventure. Aeneas exclaims:

Hark, what good sport is out of town today!³

and Troilus adds—

But to the sport abroad.⁴

The challenge sent to the Greeks by Hector, and delivered in the absurdly chivalric manner of courtly Aeneas, testifies to the influence of chivalry. Aeneas takes the character of a herald-at-arms at a tournament:

He bade me take a trumpet
And to his purpose speak: , Kings, princes, lords!
If there be one among the fair'st of Greece
That holds his honor higher than his ease,
That seeks his praise more than he fears his peril,
That knows his valour, and knows not his fear,
That loves his mistress more than in confession,
With truant vows to her own lips he loves,
(And dare avow her beauty and her worth
In other arms than hers,—to him this challenge.
Hector in view of Trojans and of Greeks
Shall make it good or do his best to do it,
He hath a lady wiser, fairer, truer,
Than ever Greek did compass in his arms;

¹ T. C. v. 2. 87.

² T. C. v. 2. 91.

³ T. C. i. l. 117.

⁴ T. C. i. l. 119.

And will tomorrow with his trumpet call,
Midway between your tents and walls of Troy,
To rouse a Grecian that is true in love:
If any come, Hector shall honor him;
If none, he'll say in Troy when he retires
The Grecian Dames are sunburnt, and not worth
The splinter of a lance.¹

This challenge is favorably accepted in the Grecian camp. Old Nestor declares that he will accept the challenge if there is no one else to do so. Even he is swayed by medieval notions of chivalry. He will fight to prove the beauty of his lady.

But if there be not in our Grecian host
One noble man that hath one spark of fire
To answer for his love, tell him from me,
I'll hide my silver beard in a gold beaver
And in my vantbrace put this wither'd brawn;
And, meeting him, will tell him that my lady
Was fairer than his grandam, and as chaste
As may be in the world; his youth in flood,
I'll prove this truth with my three drops of blood.²

It will be noticed that it is medieval armor that Nestor speaks of. On the morning of the contest between Hector and Ajax, Aeneas sums up the issue in terms of chivalry:

Let us address to tend on Hector's heels:
The glory of our Troy doth this day lie
On his fair worth and single chivalry.³

The combat takes place in accordance with the rules of knight-hood. Aeneas arranges the terms. Hector makes much of the blood relation between himself and Ajax, and because of this refuses to fight to the finish. The combat takes a chivalrous turn, and Hector is invited to the Greek camp. His welcome by the Greek leaders is permeated with the spirit of chivalry. The vindictive foes of the battlefield discourse like old friends, exchange jests, boasts and threats. Achilles' speech gives the general attitude:

¹T. C. i. 3. 263-83.

²T. C. i. 3. 294-301.

³T. C. iv. 4. 145-48.

To-morrow do I meet thee, fell as death;
To-night all friends.¹

Hector is the great exponent of chivalry. In him are summed up all the qualities of the perfect knight. He is always gallant on the battlefield. He never takes advantage of a foe, but on the contrary, he is too lenient. Troilus takes him to task for this fault which later proved his undoing:

Troilus—Brother, you have a vice of mercy in you,
Which better fits a lion than a man.

Hector—What vice is that, good Troilus? chide me for it.

Troilus—When many times the captive Grecian falls,
Even in the fan and wind of your fair sword,
You bid them rise and live.

Hector—O! 'tis fair play,

Troilus— Fool's play, by heaven, Hector.²

This is exemplified when Hector spares Achilles when he could have conquered him. Achilles profited by his courtesy, though he professed to scorn it.

I do disdain thy courtesy proud Trojan.³

In Medieval chivalry, a knight scorned the thoughts of contesting with an inferior in social rank, hence when Hector meets Thersites on the field he demands:

What are thou, Greek? art thou for Hector's match?
Art thou of blood and honor?⁴

And Thersites replies anxiously and hurriedly, also truly:

No, no, I am a rascal; a scurvy railing knave; a very filthy rogue.

Thus Hector, living up to his chivalric ideals, answers him:

I do believe thee: live.

This element of elaborate courtesy proves Hector's tragic flaw, and finally the foe he had spared proves incapable of appreciation

¹ T. C. iv. 5. 268-69.

² T. C. v. iii. 36-44.

³ T. C. v. 5. 15.

⁴ T. C. v. 4. 26-30.

of it, and so failed to spare him in similar circumstances.

According to the customs of lovers of the Middle Ages, Troilus and Cressida exchange tokens, a sleeve for a glove. Later, when Cressida gives the sleeve to Diomed, he says he will wear it on his helm to see if Troilus will dare challenge it. When he captures Troilus' horse, he sends it to Cressida. All the knights fight on horseback, their language is that of chivalry, love, fair ladies, tokens, knightly armor, courtesy to foes.

Throughout the play the Trojans are represented as more courtly and generous than the Greeks. Hector's chivalry is contrasted with Achilles' outspoken hostility. Aeneas is the very "pink of courtesy." He approaches the Grecian leaders, when he brings Hector's challenge, with such courtly and gallant language that Agamemnon is not sure whether he is in earnest or is making fun of them:

This Trojan scorns us: or the men of Troy
Are ceremonious courtiers.¹

And Aeneas answers him truthfully, summing up the chief characteristics of his countrymen:

Courtiers as free, as debonair, unarm'd
As bending angels; that's their fame in peace:
But when they would seem soldiers, they have galls,
Good arms, strong joints, true swords, and Jove's accord,
Nothing so full of heart.

The two war councils bring out well the contrast between the Greeks and the Trojans. In the war council of Troy, old King Priam should be the ruling force, but he merely introduces the issue, which is that if Helen will be delivered up the account will be considered settled and nothing else will be demanded. The young sons control the affairs of state, and strangest of all, Paris, the selfish cause of all the strife, and the young hot-headed, passionate Troilus have more power than Priam, Hector, Helenus, and Cassandra. The wise, practical reasons of Hector and the moral issues he sets forth are both over-run by the less sensible advice of two young lovers. Priam once gives a feeble protest. He reminds Paris that he enjoys the sweets of the war, while all the rest have the bitterness. It is only a protest and goes unheeded; the youths have their way. On the other hand,

¹ *T. C. i. 3. 233-39.*

the Greek policies are shaped by the shrewd, diplomatic, and practical Ulysses, and the grave, judicious, and wise counselor, Nestor. Agamemnon is a brave general, but of little consequence in managing affairs. Patroclus and Achilles do not stand out very favorably, but Shakespeare only followed medieval tradition in fashioning their characters. That Shakespeare cynically made the Greeks less worthy than the Trojans is not substantiated by the text. This belief is due, I think, to the fact that Achilles and Ajax occupy such unfavorable places. It should be remembered, however, that this is not in fact entirely contrary to Homer, though it may be in spirit. Achilles in the classics is a fierce warrior, absolutely unmerciful and exceedingly cruel. When he is about to kill Hector, who begs him at least to see that his body has burial, he heartlessly refuses:

Dog, he replied, urge not my ruth, by parents soul, nor knees;
I would to God that any rage would let me eat thee raw,
Sliced into pieces.¹

Horse, chariot, in haste
He called for; and those joined, the horse
Was to his chariot tied,
And thrice about the sepulchre he made his fury ride,
Dragging the person. All this past, in his pavilion
Still suffering it t'oppress the dust.²

Achilles' anger is always "divine wrath" in Homer. Ajax in Ovid is represented as stupid, vain, and haughty. He is called a dolt, and a gross head:

Rayling of this foolish dolt.³

His wit is blockish. These characteristics are merely emphasized by Shakespeare. As for Nestor, Ulysses, and Agamemnon, they will compare favorably with any three Trojans. Nestor is very sympathetically portrayed:

As venerable Nestor, hatch'd in silver.⁴

His age and wisdom are always noted:

Tell him of Nestor, one that was a man
Where Hector's grandsire sucked; he is old now.⁵

¹ *Iliad*, (Chapman), Book 22.

² *Iliad*, (Chapman), Book 24.

³ Ovid (Golding), *Metamorphoses*, Book 13, line 373.

⁴ *T. C. i. 3. 65.*

⁵ *T. C. i. 3. 91-2.*

The Trojans are more admirable in some respects. They have a finer sense of honor, more idealism, but the Greeks far surpass them in war measures. They have a shrewdness, diplomacy, wisdom, power to plan and execute, which is mostly lacking to the Trojans. We cannot help sympathizing with the Trojans though, because of the chivalry, the essential nobleness of their greatest warrior, Hector, the hope of Troy, who exemplifies the best characteristics of the Trojan race.

The comic element is pronounced in *Troilus and Cressida*. When the play opens a long truce has just closed, skirmishes were going on, but there was little real fighting. Troilus, love-sick, finds no interest in the battlefield. Hector sends a "roisting challenge" to arouse the Greeks, who during the truce had become dull and factious. This situation at the Greek camp is one of the most realistic parts of the play, and though it may not be true to the spirit of the classical story of Troy, it is certainly true to life. "Yet even Homer sings of strife among the godlike heroes. Achilles in his "divine wrath" refuses to go to battle. Shakespeare knew that after seven years of fighting around the walls of Troy, the high enthusiasm and spirit of patriotism naturally became slack. A long truce had given opportunity for laxness in the discipline of the army. Achilles and Patroclus loll in their tents, jesting at the expense of the other Greek leaders. Patroclus gives a farcical representation of the various generals, while Achilles holds his sides, convulsed with laughter. If the Trojan heroes look on the war as a game, these two Greeks survey it as a huge joke. Thersites, when he "opes his mastick jaws" is another source of fun for these merry Greeks. He is the most realistically vulgar of all Shakespeare's comic characters. He is also one of the quickest witted. He has a sharp clear insight into character, and though he always sees the worst of everything, the element of truth is easily seen in most of his "railing" remarks. Strangely enough, this is the one character taken directly from Homer. He is not mentioned in any of the medieval versions of the Trojan war. There is ample suggestion in the *Iliad* for Shakespeare's Thersites, but it is a very lifeless picture compared with the brilliant and animated fool of *Troilus and Cressida*. Homer characterizes him thus :

Thersites only would speak all, a most disordered store
Of words he foolishly puor'd out; of which his mind held
more
Than it could manage: anything with which he could procure

Laughter, he never could contain. He should have yet been
sure
To touch no King: t'oppose their states becomes not jester's
parts.
But he the filthiest fellow was of all that had deserts
In Troy's brave siege.¹

Shakespeare took this description and out of it turned a living individual, one of the most interesting characters of the play.

Ajax is made a comic character, and he affords no less amusement than Thersites. The ruse which Ulysses and Nestor use to arouse Achilles from his stupid indifference is the one original contribution Shakespeare makes to the plot. Ajax in his vanity and conceit is made the butt of ridicule. This affords amusement as well as serves a purpose. Shakespeare, doubtless, wondered what the Homeric heroes did while encamped on the plains of Troy for ten years. They could not have kept up the fever heat of patriotism and high resolve. War camps usually become after long periods scenes of disorder, loose morals, and discontent; so Shakespeare allows his imagination to picture real men in a real war camp. The small familiar details necessarily tend to destroy the dignity and grandeur of the classical heroes.

What was Shakespeare's conception of the young hero, Troilus? Some scholars maintain that Ulysses is the hero; others, Hector. The complexity of the plot leads to disagreement as to just what Shakespeare was attempting to do. It seems to me that while the comic element is pronounced and the camp story is very prominent, the main interest and action centres about Troilus. He is the one character in the play who changes, goes through a process of growth. The tragic forces of the play, love and war, center about him. He is frustrated in both, but the close of the play finds him a greater hero. He is young—Pandarus says that he is "very young" and that "he ne'er saw three-and-twenty." When the play opens, he is a typical love-sick youth. He has become infatuated with the beautiful Cressida. She is all he can think of. The war does not interest him. In his restlessness he forgets patriotism and is chided for it by his brother, Aeneas. He goes to battle half-heartedly. The offer of peace by the Greeks on the terms that Helen be restored arouses him immediately to action. Paris loves Helen, therefore the passionate young lover, Troilus, takes sides with him at the war council, and by his

¹ *Iliad*, (Chapman), Book II.

ardor and eloquence sways them to his opinion. His happiness is then made complete by the winning of Cressida. It is a short-lived happiness, though. On the morning of the parting of the lovers, Troilus has a prophetic foreboding of the impending tragedy to their love, and again and again he urges Cressida to be true. Was it wholly his fear of the charms of the merry Greeks, or did he dimly suspect that Cressida was fickle? His fears are realized before he has time scarcely to form them. To those who say that Troilus' love was wholly sensual, Shakespeare answers:

Let it not be believed for Womanhood!
Think we had mothers!

If beauty have a soul, this is not she;
If souls guide vows, if vows be sanctimony,
If sanctimony be the god's delight,
If there be rule in unity itself
This is not she.¹

With disillusion in love, came disbelief in the goodness of everything. This proves that Cressida stood for something more to him than mere physical beauty. Defeated in love, Troilus now throws himself into the fighting with reckless abandon. When Hector begs of him not to fight that day, calls him "young Troilus," he quickly resents it, and in turn gives the sound advice to show no mercy to the Greeks. Nothing can keep him from the battlefield. It is the only outlet for his breaking heart. He proves himself a valiant soldier, a second Hector, fearless on the field. The death of Hector is the second great blow to Troilus. He now fully realizes his own responsibility in the war, and he realizes that it is a hopeless war for the Trojans. Troy's absolute dependence on Hector is emphasized by Shakespeare in order to make more tragic the fate of the younger brother left behind:

He's dead; and at the murderer's horse's tail
In beastly sort, dragg'd through the shameful field.
Frown on, you heavens, effect your rage with speed!
Sit gods upon your thrones, and smile at Troy!
I say, at once let your brief pledges be mercy,
And linger not our sure destruction on!²

¹ *T. C.* v. 2. 126-27; 134-39.

² *T. C.* v. 15. 4-9.

Aeneas rebukes him for frightening the army thus, and Troilus replies, knowing that he must bear the heavy news of Hector's death to Priam and Hecuba, and that the fate of Troy is now resting on his young shoulders:

You understand me not that tell me so.
 I do not speak of flight, of fear, of death;
 But dare all imminence that gods and men
 Address their dangers in. Hector is gone:
 Who shall tell Priam so, or Hecuba?
 Let him that will a screech-owl aye be called
 Go in to Troy, and say there Hector's dead.
 There is a word will Priam turn to stone.
 Make wells and Niobes of the maids and wives
 Cold statutes of the youth: and, in a word,
 Scare Troy out of itself. But march away:
 Hector is dead; there is no more to say.
 Stay yet, you vile abominable tents,
 That proudly pight our Phrigian Plaius
 Let Titan rise as early as he dare,
 I'll through and through you! And thou,
 great-siz'd coward,
 No space of earth shall sunder our two hates:
 I'll haunt thee like a wicked conscience still,
 That mouldeth goblins swift as frenzy's thoughts,
 Strike a free march to Troy! With cony art go!
 Hope of revenge shall hide our inward woe.¹

This is a new Troilus, or the bringing out of the true Troilus. When we remember his speeches in the first scene of the play, we can realize what a great development has taken place:

But I am weaker than a woman's tear
 Tamer than sleep, fonder than ignorance,
 Less valiant than the virgin in the night,
 And skillless as unpracticed infancy.²

Many complain because Troilus is left alive. Miss Porter shows that this is more artistically tragic for Troilus than death would have been. Troilus is—

“the core of tragic affliction, the survivor of Troy's ruin. Troilus lives to mourn for Hector, to sum up the tragic issue consciously, to taste all the bitterness of defeat in love and

¹T. C. v. 10. 11-31.

²T. C. i. l. 8-12.

war. . . . The woe of it is thus perfected as it could not be if Hector were less the warrior type of loss, and Troilus were less the luckless hero, left over, love-crossed, war-crossed, withered in his youthful prime by full knowledge of the futility of ardor and courtesy when guile and force combine to crush them out."¹

We found in *Lucrece* that Shakespeare saw the Trojan war as tragic in its development, but foolish in its beginning. The sole cause is ascribed to the lust of Paris. This viewpoint is emphasized in the play. Every one from Thersites to Priam realizes this. Troilus sums up the general sentiment:

Fools on both sides! Helen must needs be fair,
When with your blood you daily paint her thus.²

In *Lucrece*, Shakespeare asks why the private wrong and pleasures of one be made the public evil of so many. This seems unfair, but in *Troilus and Cressida* he shows the essential justice of it. The sin of Helen and Paris must necessarily affect the whole Trojan race, for they agreed to it. In the war council sober judgment and moral rights give way to the foolish reasoning of passionate youth. Hector pleads for the cause of right:

Nature craves

All dues to be render'd to their owners: Now,
What nearer debt in all humanity
Than wife is to husband? if this law
Of nature be corrupted through affection,
And that great minds, of partial indulgence
To their benumbed wills, resist the same;
There is a law in each well-ordered nation
To curb those raging appetites that are
Most disobedient and refractory.
If Helen then be wife to Sparta's King,
As it is known she is, these moral laws
Of nature, and of nations, speak aloud
To have her back return'd: thus to persist
In doing wrong extenuates not wrong,
But makes it much more heavy.³

Hector urges that the sin of Helen and Paris should be expiated. The wrong to society should not be allowed to exist. Those who see

¹Charlotte Porter, *Introd. to Troilus and Cressida* (First Folio Edition.)

²*T. C. i. l. 94-5.*

³*T. C. ii. 2. 173-88.*

the play as cynical only see a chivalrous nation overcome by craft and guile. They fail to see this great tragic flaw in the Trojan race itself that is so prominent in Shakespeare's mind. The fall of Troy is not due alone to Greek duplicity. "Doting Priam" does not restrain his sons' evil desires. He allows them to govern the war council. Priam and his soldiers agreed to the rape of Helen, and they must bear the consequence. Shakespeare does not represent the outcome as unfair. Injustice does not prevail in the final outcome of the war. Shakespeare, however, does make us sympathize with the unfortunate race, but he would not have us to excuse it.

Shakespeare's interest in the Troy story was caused by its popularity, his treatment of it determined by his sources of information, modified by original interpretation of facts in accordance with his ethical ideals. The interest in the story was transitory. His later plays show little influence of it. However, at the time of interest the story played an important part in his dramatic art. The play will always stand out as one of the most unique and interesting contributions to the versions of the Troy story, and as one of the most powerful plays of Shakespeare. The beauty of the poetry, and the exactness of the characterizations of the Greek and Trojan heroes are two of its outstanding features. He surpassed Homer in individualizing his characters. William Godwin well expressed this:

"The Achilles, the Ajax, and the various Grecian heroes of Shakespeare, on the other hand are absolute men, deficient in nothing which can tend to individualize them, and already touched with the promethian fire that might infuse a soul into what, without it, were lifeless form."

PART III

Shakespeare's Sources of the Troy Story

Ben Jonson's characterization of Shakespeare's classical knowledge as "small Latin and less Greek" has led to numerous conjectures about the sources of his classical mythology. The King's New School which Shakespeare attended gave a thorough course in Latin. Shakespeare was drilled in Lyly's famous *Grammatica Latina*, the chief text book. He also studied the various Latin authors including Mantuanus, Ver-

¹ William Godwin, *The Life of Chaucer*.

gil, Seneca, Plautus, Horace, Ovid, and Cicero. Ovid became Shakespeare's favorite Latin author, and from him Shakespeare probably received more than from any other person among his sources. Baynes,¹ in making a detailed study of what Shakespeare learned at school, proves him acquainted with Vergil and Ovid in the original Latin. Stapfer² adds Sallust and Caesar to the list, but ascribes his knowledge of Ovid to Golding's translation of the *Metamorphoses*.

Most of the definite references outside of *Troilus and Cressida* are either from Vergil or Ovid. Many, however, are merely the expression of the popular conception of the story. Such are most of the references to Hector, Helen, Paris, Troilus, Cressida, and Pandarus, while those to Ajax and Ulysses show both medieval and classical derivation. The common people were familiar with the main features of the story through stage representations. The uneducated in Shakespeare's plays show a knowledge of the chief heroes and their outstanding characteristics. No definite sources can be assigned to these references. Hector's one trait was valor, and this characteristic was familiar to all. The same is true of the references to Helen and Paris. Helen, as the cause of the war and the type of physical beauty, was a well known figure in literature. In *The Tragical History of Dr. Faustus*, Faustus asks, "Was this the face that launched a thousand ships?" Shakespeare gives the same facts in much the same way:

Fair Leda's daughter had a thousand wooers,

and,

Was this fair face the cause, quoth she
Why the Grecians sacked Troy?

"Fair Leda's daughter" shows a definite source, however, which is probably Ovid's *Metamorphoses* (Book 10). Paris, as Helen's lover, shows no definite source.

The allusions to Troilus and Cressida are the mere expression of the popular conception, except in *The Merchant of Venice*, where a direct reference is made to Chaucer's *Troilus and Criseyde*. When Shakespeare has Rosalind say that Troilus had his "brains dashed out by a Grecian club," he makes use of no known source. It is a careless

¹ T. S. Baynes, *Shakespeare Studies*.

² Paul Stapfer, *Shakespeare and Classical Antiquity*.

and humorous allusion where exactness is unnecessary to make the illustration apt. The only references to Pandarus are made by comic characters, who merely sum up the popular notion of him.

"Sly" Ulysses occurs many times in Golding's translation of Ovid's *Metamorphoses*, but not in the original Latin, hence it is argued that Shakespeare used Golding's translation. The term "sly", however, was a stock epithet for Ulysses, and this was doubtless the reason that Golding used it. Therefore Shakespeare may have been using Golding when he calls Ulysses sly, or he may have been only following the popular conception. The reference to Ulysses and Diomed stealing the steeds of Rhesus is taken from the *Metamorphoses* (Book 13).

The character of Ajax is derived from the *Metamorphoses* (Book 13). His seven-fold shield is described at the beginning of the famous contention with Ulysses over the armor of Achilles. Ulysses, in stating his claims to the armor, ridicules the idea of giving it to such a "dolt and grosshead." He characterizes the speech of Ajax as the "rayling of this foolish dolt," and calls attention to his stupidity, his conceit, and his ostentatious boasting. The madness and suicide of Ajax is pictured in the last of the thirteenth book of the *Metamorphoses*. Shakespeare uses this as an example of stupidity and unrestrained anger.

The popular conception of Achilles is expressed, when, in *Love's Labour's Lost*, he is called the foe of Hector. The magic qualities of his famous spear mentioned in the second part of *Henry VI* is taken from the *Metamorphoses*:

And when the noble Telephus did my dart of steele
The double force of wounding and of healing also feelee.¹

I did wound
King Teleph with his speare, and when he lay upon the
ground
I was entreated with the speare to heale him safe and sound.²

The story of the fall of Troy, the perjured Sinon, the wooden horse, filled with Greeks, the burning of the city, the death of Priam, the sorrow of Hecuba, the flight of Aeneas with Anchises, Aeneas' tale to Dido, Dido's sister Anna, Aeneas' desertion, and Dido's death are all taken from Vergil. The death of Priam and sorrow of Hecuba

¹ Ovid, *The Metamorphoses* (Golding), Book 12, line 121.

² *Ibid.*, Book 13, line 210.

in *Hamlet* is an adaptation of the second book of Vergil's *Aeneid* (lines 268-97). The painting in *Lucrece* is also, for the most part, taken from the second book the *Aeneid*. The description of Ilion is taken from Lydgate; the characters of Ajax, Ulysses, Nestor, and the spear of Achilles are taken from the *Metamorphoses*, but on the whole the atmosphere is Vergilian.

Troilus and Cressida owes its enigmatic nature to the complexity of its sources. Only Shakespeare could have combined the classical, the medieval, and the renaissance treatments of the story in such a logical way. Ovid and Homer furnish some of the material, Chaucer the love story, but the main outline of the plot, and the medieval atmosphere is contributed by Caxton.

To Ovid Shakespeare is indebted for the characteristics of Ajax, Ulysses, and Nestor. The Ajax of *Troilus and Cressida* is the Ajax of Ulysses' speech in the *Metamorphoses*. His "blunt rage," stupidity, and cowardly boasting are emphasized. Ulysses is also fundamentally the same as in the *Metamorphoses*. He outwits Ajax and wins the prize by his superior craft, his slyness, his wise guile. Shakespeare deepens and multiplies these characteristics given by Ovid. Nestor's outstanding feature in *Troilus and Cressida* is his age, with the wisdom and experience that goes with years. Shakespeare speaks of his "white beard," of "venerable Nestor hatched in silver." In answer to Hector's challenge, Nestor asks the messenger to—

Tell him of Nestor, one that was a man
When Hector's grandsire sucked: he is old now:¹

In Ovid, Nestor says:

Though the length of time have made my senses dim,
And divers things erst seen in youth now out of mind be gone:
Yit heave I still no things in mind: and of them all is none
Among so many both of peere and war, that yit doth take
More steadfast root in memorye and of that time may make
A man great store of things through long continuance for
too see:
Two hundred years already of my life full passed bee
And now I go upon a third.²

Homer furnishes Shakespeare with the character of Thersites. Nowhere in the medieval treatments of the Troy story is such a person

¹ T. C. i. 3. 291.

² Ovid, *Metamorphoses*, Book 12, line 205.

to be found. In 1537 the Comic Interlude of Thersites gives a superficial resemblance to Shakespeare's Thersites, but there is little in common between them. Shakespeare took the picture of the "reviler" of Homer and gave life to it in the witty railer of the play. There are several other events of *Troilus and Cressida* that show the influence of Homer. The scene where Cassandra breaks in upon the war council with the prophecy of the ruin of Troy is impressive in its classic tone. This seems more reminiscent of Homer than of the shrieking lamentations of the medieval Cassandra. In Caxton and other medieval treatments, the deeds of Troilus arouse Achilles from his sullen refusal to enter battle. In Shakespeare, as in Homer, it is the death of his friend Patroclus that stirs him to action.

The death of Hector in Shakespeare is an unusual combination. In Caxton, Achilles slips up to Hector unawares and stabs him while his shield is lowered. Hector's body is rescued by his friends. In Homer, the body is tied to Achilles' chariot and is dragged three times about the sepulchre of Patroclus. In Shakespeare, he is surrounded by the Myrmadons and killed while unarmed by Achilles. His body is then tied to the tail of Achilles' horse and dragged across the battlefield. In Caxton, the circumstances of Troilus' death are those that Shakespeare applies to the death of Hector. Either Shakespeare purposely does this, or he uses Caxton's account of Hector's death and adds to it the Homeric story of Achilles' dragging the body.

The love story is based primarily upon Chaucer's *Troilus and Criseyde*, with some changes in the development of the three main characters, Troilus, Cressida, and Pandarus. The rest of the plot is based upon Caxton, with the exception of the ruse which Ulysses and Nestor use to arouse Achilles to action, which is Shakespeare's own invention, and upon which much of the unity of the play depends.

It is a problem to decide whether for the main plot and atmosphere of the play, Shakespeare made use of Lydgate or Caxton, as both tell the very same events, and both received their knowledge from Guido, though Caxton's immediate source was Leferve. Miss Charlotte Porter¹ favors Caxton as the source of Shakespeare, and says that if Shakespeare, Lydgate, and Caxton are read along together it will be unmistakable that Caxton is the source. She analyzes the prologue, and identifies the various facts in Caxton. The Greeks are called "orgulous." This unusual word is often used by Caxton, who took it from the French of Leferve. "The port of Athens" and "the

¹ Charlotte Porter, Sources—*Troilus and Cressida*. First Folio Edition, p. 129.

sixty and nine kings" agree exactly with Caxton's designation of the starting place of the Greek ships, and of the number of kings who sailed to Troy. The names of the six gates of Priam's city agree more nearly in form with those of Caxton than with the names as given by Lydgate. The names, according to Lydgate, are Dardanydes, Tymbria, Helyas, Cethas, Troiana, Anthonydes; according to Caxton, Dardane, Tymbria, Helyas, Chetas, Troyenne, Antenorides. Shakespeare gives the names in much the same form as Caxton does: Dardan, Timbria, Helias, Chetas, Trojen and Antenorides. Shakespeare also preserves from Caxton the name of Hector's horse as Galathe. Miss Porter has identified the various events of the play with the narrative of Caxton.

However, in the result, it matters little whether Shakespeare used Lydgate or Caxton. He preserved the medieval atmosphere, and the main features of the plot contributed by both, but he so modified them by his genius that the play of *Troilus and Cressida* is unique in the history of the Troy story. Stapfer¹ says that if Shakespeare "had known any Arabian legends concerning the Trojan war, he would have used them, had they pleased him, and suited his purpose."

FRENCH HAYNES.

¹ Paul Stapfer, *Shakespeare and Classical Antiquity*.

The Little Flower of Encouragement in the Poetic Contests of the College of Rhetoric at Toulouse

The history of the Academy of the Floral Games of Toulouse divides itself into three periods: the first, the period of the Consistory of Gay Science, which lasted from the founding in 1323 to about the opening of the sixteenth century; the second, the period of the College of the Art and Science of Rhetoric, lasting throughout the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries; and the third, the period of the Academy of the Floral Games of Toulouse, lasting from 1694, when the College of Rhetoric was converted into an institution of state under Louis XIV, down to the present time. The writer has already outlined the history of the two earlier periods in the *Romantic Review* (vol. xii., no. 3)¹, dealing especially with the transformation of the Gay Science into the College of Rhetoric, and with the poets and their poetry in the period of the Renaissance.

The custom of awarding to the successful contestants gold and silver prizes wrought in the form of flowers dates from the very beginning of the society. Throughout the period of the Gay Science the three principal prizes awarded annually were the Violet, the Eglantine, and the Marigold (Provençal *Ganch*, French *Souci*). These three were continued throughout the period of the College of Rhetoric as principal prizes. In addition to these three main prizes, a fourth prize known as the Flower of Encouragement was frequently awarded. Little is known of this custom during the period of the Gay Science, but abundant information concerning the awarding of the flower of encouragement is afforded by the *Livre Rouge*, the secretary's record of the annual poetic contests during the greater part of the period of the College of Rhetoric. The *Livre Rouge*, which has been preserved in manuscript in the library of the Floral Games at Toulouse, contains the record of the annual meetings (May 1-3) from 1513 to 1641. It is the purpose of the writer in the present article to discuss the awarding of the flower of encouragement during this period.

No secretary's records have been preserved from the period of Gay Science, and the principal source of information concerning the

¹ See also Dawson's *Toulouse in the Renaissance* Part I, C. U. Press, N. Y. 1921.

